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THE

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OF

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In offering to the public, the present complete edition of the works of this great American classic, the Publishers feel themselves called upon, briefly to state the general reasons which have induced them to undertake the task of introducing to their countrymen, in a newer, more accessible, and more popular form, a writer who has not yet, as they conceive, taken that place among the original and masterful minds of the age, to which his singular merits so justly entitle him. Impressed themselves, with a feeling of deep and respectful admiration for one of the most profound and vigorous thinkers of the day—a man honoured and reverenced by all classes of his countrymen, and by men of every variety of religious opinion, not merely for his great talents, but for the enlightened wisdom and benevolence, which shed so pure a lustre over his writings and his public character,—they feel it to be a duty, and they consider it a privilege, to extend the range of his usefulness, by assisting to send his works through society, in a form, cheap, and adapted to the present habits and tastes of the reading world. The present *is the only complete edition of Channing's Works which has yet been published*—the Publishers having been enabled to enrich it with several articles which have not appeared in any collected copy of his writings, —while the price is but half that of the Boston and London edition. They have considered it proper, also, to throw his Sermons chiefly into the second volume—those only upon the Evidences of Christianity, being introduced into the first. By this arrangement, they have brought before the reader, in a consecutive form, the whole of those exquisitely beautiful and

original pieces of literary criticism, and other literary miscellanies, which have been so generally admired for the depth and originality of the ideas—the comprehension and grasp of thought—and the singular eloquence and vigorous terseness of style which they exhibit. The Publishers beg to observe here, for the benefit of those to whom the great name of Channing is yet almost unknown, that the general characteristics of this eminent writer and divine, are, a fearless and lofty independence of character; an imagination inconceivably rich and fertile, but subdued and kept under by the powers of a vigorous and astute intellect; a comprehensive grasp of his subject—with an intense energy and copious richness of expression, devoid of turgidity, or flaccid violence—and which flash out upon the reader, from the depths of a teeming and active mind, views, equally just, original, and profound—like gleams from the inner shrine of a sacred and hitherto impervious sanctuary. His style is indeed a model of chaste and severe elegance. Its compression is intense; there is no empty verbosity—no playing with language; all is sound and vigorous muscle, braced up to the proper mark. It is a mass of lion's marrow, fit for a strong intellectual digestion, and well calculated to cure the sickly tastes so prevalent at present in regard to composition.

The Publishers would only further remark, that in the present edition they have studied to gratify the eye in connexion with the improvement of the mind, and the gratification of the higher literary and intellectual tastes; whilst economy has also been consulted—two volumes containing such a quantity of letter-press, with the general getting up of so handsome a character, seldom having been offered before upon such terms. They beg to add, in conclusion, that whilst in a business point of view, they will undoubtedly feel gratified by the success of their undertaking,—that satisfaction will be heightened in character and degree, by the knowledge that they have been the means of making generally known, the talents and the virtues of Channing to their fellow-countrymen. It is proper to notice, that a small part only of the contents of these volumes is devoted to subjects purely theological and controversial. The most timid need not therefore be alarmed

for their orthodoxy—the illustrious author dealing more in general and abstract views of religion and man's nature, than in discussions of a sectarian and limited character. To the general reader, and the man of refined intellectual taste, hitherto unacquainted with this elegant and powerful writer, they confidently present these volumes, as an invaluable addition to the classical library—worthy of the shelves, which sustain the works of a Massillon and a Barrow, a Johnson and a Blair.

Glasgow, July, 1835.

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PREFACE.*

The present volume is, with the exception of one discourse, a republication of various tracts, which were called forth by particular occasions, and which were never intended to appear in their present form.—The reader cannot be more aware than I am, that they need many and great changes; but they would probably have never been republished, had I waited for leisure to conform them to my ideas of what they should be, or to make them more worthy of the unexpected favour which they have received. The articles, in general, were intended to meet the wants of the times when they were written, and to place what I deem great truths, within reach of the multitude of men. If the reader will bear in mind this design, some defects will more readily be excused. The second review, in particular, should be referred to the date of its original publication.

Certain tracts, which drew a degree of attention on their first appearance, have been excluded from this volume. My reasons for so doing are various. Some have been omitted, because they seem to me of little or no worth; some, because they do not express sufficiently my present views; and some, because they owed their interest to events, which have faded more or less from the public mind. In their present form, I wish none of them to be found in a collection of my writings.

I esteem it a privilege, that my writings have called forth many strictures, and been subjected to an unsparing criticism. I know that in some things I must have erred. I cannot hope,

* Prefixed to the volume of "Reviews, Discourses, and Miscellanies," published at Boston in 1830.

that even in my most successful efforts, I have done full justice to any great truth. Deeply conscious of my fallibleness, I wish none of my opinions to be taken on trust, nor would I screen any from the most rigorous examination. If my opponents have exposed my errors, I owe them a great debt; and should I fail, through the force of prejudice, to see and acknowledge my obligation to them in this life, I hope to do so in the future world.

I have declined answering the attacks made on my writings, not from contempt of my opponents, among whom are men of distinguished ability and acknowledged virtue, but because I believed that I should do myself and others more good, by seeking higher and wider views, than by defending what I had already offered. I feared that my mind might become stationary by lingering round my own writings. I never doubted, that if anything in these were worthy to live, it would survive all assaults, and I was not anxious to uphold for a moment, what was doomed, by its want of vital energy, to pass away.

There is one charge, to which, it may be thought, that I ought to have replied—the charge of misrepresenting the opinions of my opponents. When I considered, however, that in so doing, I should involve myself in personal controversy, the worst of all controversies, I thought myself bound to refrain. Had I entered on this discussion, I must have spoken with great freedom, and should have caused great exasperation. I must have set down as a grave moral offence, the disingenuousness so common at the present day, which, under pretence of maintaining old opinions, so disguises and discolours them, that they can with difficulty be recognised. I must have thrown back the charge of misrepresentation, and shown how unfairly I was reproached with ascribing to my adversaries, opinions which I supposed them to reject, and which I only affirmed to be necessarily involved in their acknowledged doctrines. I must have met the quotations from their standard authors, which were arrayed against me, by showing, that these were examples of the self-contradiction, or inconsistency, which is inseparable from error. What kind

of a controversy would have grown out of such a reply, can easily be conjectured. I certainly did not think, that by provoking it, I should aid the cause of good morals or good manners, of piety or peace. That I have never been unjust to those who differ from me, I dare not say; for in this particular, better men than myself often err. Perhaps, too, I ought to apprehend, that I have sometimes wanted due deference to the feelings of those whose opinions I have called in question; for I have been loudly reproached with the want of Christian tenderness. I can only say, and here I speak confidently, that I have written nothing in anger, or unkindness; and that I now retain the strong language which has given offence, only because it seems to me to be demanded by the greatness of the truths which I defend, and of the errors which I oppose.

It is due to myself to say, that the controversial character of a part of this volume, is to be ascribed, not to the love of disputation, but to the circumstances in which I was called to write. It was my lot to enter on public life at a time when this part of the country was visited, by what I esteem one of its sorest scourges; I mean, by a revival of the spirit of intolerance and persecution. I saw the commencement of those systematic efforts, which have been since developed, for fastening on the community a particular creed. Opinions, which I thought true and purifying, were not only assailed as errors, but branded as crimes. Then began, what seems to me one of the gross immoralities of our times, the practice of aspersing the characters of exemplary men, on the ground of differences of opinion as to the most mysterious articles of faith,—then began those assaults on freedom of thought and speech, which, had they succeeded, would have left us only the name of religious liberty,—then it grew perilous to search the Scriptures for ourselves, and to speak freely according to the convictions of our own minds. I saw that penalties, as serious in this country as fine and imprisonment, were, if possible, to be attached to the profession of liberal views of Christianity,—the penalties of general hatred and scorn; and that a degrading uniformity of opinion was to be imposed by the severest per-

secution, which the spirit of the age would allow. At such a period, I dared not be silent. To oppose what I deemed error was to me a secondary consideration. My first duty, as I believed, was, to maintain practically and resolutely the rights of the human mind; to live and to suffer, if to suffer were necessary, for that intellectual and religious liberty, which I prize incomparably more than my civil rights. I felt myself called, not merely to plead in general for freedom of thought and speech, but what was more important and trying, to assert this freedom by action. I should have felt myself disloyal to truth and freedom, had I confined myself to vague commonplaces about our rights, and forborne to bear my testimony expressly and specially to proscribed and persecuted opinions. The times required that a voice of strength and courage should be lifted up, and I rejoice, that I was found among those by whom it was uttered and sent far and wide. The timid, sensitive, diffident, and doubting, needed this voice; and without it, would have been overborne by the clamor of intolerance. If in any respect I have rendered a service to humanity and religion, which may deserve to be remembered, when I shall be taken away, it is in this. I believe, that had not the spirit of religious tyranny been met, as it was, by unyielding opposition in this region, it would have fastened an iron yoke on the necks of this people. The cause of religious freedom owes its present strength to nothing so much, as to the constancy and resolution of its friends in this quarter. Here its chief battle has been fought, and not fought in vain. The spirit of intolerance is not indeed crushed; but its tones are subdued, and its menaces impotent, compared with what they would have been, had it prospered in its efforts here.

The remarks now offered, have been intended to meet the objection which may be made to this volume, of being too controversial. Other objections may be urged against it. Very possibly it may seem to want perfect consistency. I have long been conscious, that we are more in danger of being enslaved to our own opinions, especially to such as we have expressed and defended, than to those of any other person; and I have accordingly desired to write without any reference to my pre-

vious publications, or without any anxiety to accommodate my present to my past views. In treatises, prepared in this spirit and at distant intervals, some incongruity of thought or feeling can hardly fail to occur.

By some, an opposite objection may be urged, that the volume has too much repetition. This could not well be avoided in articles written on similar topics or occasions; written, too, without any reference to each other, and in the expectation that each would be read by many, into whose hands the others would not probably fall. I must add, that my interest in certain great truths, has made me anxious to avail myself of every opportunity to enforce them; nor do I feel as if they were urged more frequently than their importance demands.

I ought not to close this Preface, without expressing my obligation to two of my most valued friends, the Rev. Dr. Tuckerman of Boston, and Professor Norton of Cambridge, without whose solicitations and encouragements, I might have wanted confidence, under the lassitude of feeble health, to attempt the little which I have done for the cause of religion and freedom.

I will only add, that whilst I attach no great value to these articles, I still should not have submitted to the labour of partially revising them, did I not believe, that they set forth some great truths, which, if carried out and enforced by more gifted minds may do much for human improvement. If, by anything which I have written, I may be an instrument of directing such minds more seriously to the claims and true greatness of our nature, I shall be most grateful to God. This subject deserves and will sooner or later engage the profoundest meditations of wise and good men. I have done for it what I could; but when I think of its grandeur and importance, I earnestly desire and anticipate for it more worthy advocates. In truth, I shall see with no emotion but joy, these fugitive productions forgotten and lost in the superior brightness of writings consecrated to the work of awakening in the human soul a consciousness of its divine and immortal powers.

W. E. C.

Boston, April, 1830.

REVIEWS.

JOHN MILTON.

A TREATISE on CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON. Translated from the Original by Charles R. Sumner, M. A. Librarian and Historiographer to His Majesty, and Prebendary of Canterbury. From the London Edition. Boston, 1825. 2 vols. 8vo.

THE discovery of a work of Milton, unknown to his own times, is an important event in literary history. The consideration, that we of this age are the first readers of this Treatise, naturally heightens our interest in it; for we seem in this way to be brought nearer to the author, and to sustain the same relation which his cotemporaries bore to his writings. The work opens with a salutation, which, from any other man, might be chargeable with inflation; but which we feel to be the natural and appropriate expression of the spirit of Milton. Endowed with gifts of the soul, which have been imparted to few of our race, and conscious of having consecrated them through life to God and mankind, he rose without effort or affectation to the style of an Apostle:—"JOHN MILTON, TO ALL THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, AND TO ALL WHO PROFESS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, PEACE, AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH, AND ETERNAL SALVATION IN GOD THE FATHER, AND IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." Our ears are the first to hear this benediction, and it seems not so much to be borne to us from a distant age, as to come immediately from the sainted spirit by which it was indited.

Without meaning to disparage the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," we may say that it owes very much of the attention which it has excited, to the fame of its author. We value it chiefly as showing us the mind of Milton on that subject, which, above all others, presses upon men of thought and sensibility. We want to know in what conclusions such a man rested after a life of extensive and profound research, of magnanimous efforts for freedom and his country, and of communion with the most gifted minds of his own and former times. The book derives its chief interest from its author, and accordingly there seems to be a propriety in introducing our remarks upon it with some notice of the character of Milton. We are not sure that we could have abstained from this subject, even if we had not been able to offer so good an apology for attempting it. The intellectual and moral qualities of a great man are attractions not easily withstood, and we can hardly serve others or ourselves more, than by recalling to him the attention which is scattered among inferior topics.

In speaking of the *intellectual* qualities of Milton, we may begin with observing, that the very splendour of his poetic fame has tended to obscure or conceal the extent of his mind, and the variety of its energies and attainments. To many he seems only a poet, when in truth he was a profound scholar, a man of vast compass of thought, imbued thoroughly with all ancient and modern learning, and able to master, to mould, to impregnate with his own intellectual power, his great and various acquisitions. He had not learned the superficial doctrine of a later day, that poetry flourishes most in an uncultivated soil, and that imagination shapes its brightest visions from the mists of a superstitious age; and he had no dread of accumulating knowledge, lest it should oppress and smother his genius. He was conscious of that within him, which could quicken all knowledge, and wield it with ease and might; which could give freshness to old truths and harmony to discordant thoughts; which could bind together, by living ties and mysterious affinities, the most remote discoveries, and rear fabrics of glory and beauty from the rude

ı which other minds had collected. Milton had 'ersality which marks the highest order of intel- ıough accustomed almost from infancy to drink untains of classical literature, he had nothing ›edantry and fastidiousness which disdain all ıughts. His healthy mind delighted in genius, ›ver soil, or in whatever age, it burst forth and ›ut its fulness. He understood too well the ıd dignity, and pride of creative imagination, ı it the laws of the Greek or Roman school. ıs was not to him the only holy ground of ge- .e felt that poetry was as a universal presence. inds were everywhere his kindred. He felt ıantment of Oriental fiction, surrendered him- ıe strange creations of "Araby the Blest," and l still more in the romantic spirit of chivalry, ne tales of wonder in which it was embodied. ıgly his poetry reminds us of the ocean, which its own boundlessness contributions from all ınder heaven. Nor was it only in the depart- imagination, that his acquisitions were vast. ɜlled over the whole field of knowledge, as far then been explored. His various philological nts were used to put him in possession of the stored in all countries, where the intellect had :ivated. The natural philosophy, metaphysics, istory, theology, and political science of his former times, were familiar to him. Never e a more unconfined mind; and we would cite ıs a practical example of the benefits of that . culture of intellect, which forms one distinc- ›ur times, but which some dread as unfriendly al thought. Let such remember, that mind is n nature diffusive. Its object is the universe, strictly one, or bound together by infinite con- ınd correspondences; and accordingly its natu- ess is from one to another field of thought; and r original power, creative genius exists, the · from being distracted or oppressed by the va- ts acquisitions, will see more and more common and hidden and beautiful analogies in all the

objects of knowledge, will see mutual light shed from truth to truth, and will compel, as with a kingly power, whatever it understands, to yield some tribute of proof, or illustration, or splendour, to whatever topic it would unfold.

Milton's fame rests chiefly on his poetry, and to this we naturally give our first attention. By those who are accustomed to speak of poetry as light reading, Milton's eminence in this sphere may be considered only as giving him a high rank among the contributors to public amusement. Not so thought Milton. Of all God's gifts of intellect, he esteemed poetical genius the most transcendent. He esteemed it in himself as a kind of inspiration, and wrote his great works with something of the conscious dignity of a prophet. We agree with Milton in his estimate of poetry. It seems to us the divinest of all arts; for it is the breathing or expression of that principle or sentiment, which is deepest and sublimest in human nature; we mean, of that thirst or aspiration, to which no mind is wholly a stranger, for something purer and lovelier, something more powerful, lofty, and thrilling than ordinary and real life affords. No doctrine is more common among Christians than that of man's immortality; but it is not so generally understood, that the germs or principles of his whole future being are *now* wrapped up in his soul, as the rudiments of the future plant in the seed. As a necessary result of this constitution, the soul, possessed and moved by these mighty though infant energies, is perpetually stretching beyond what is present and visible, struggling against the bounds of its earthly prison-house, and seeking relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal being. This view of our nature, which has never been fully developed, and which goes farther towards explaining the contradictions of human life than all others, carries us to the very foundation and sources of poetry. He who cannot interpret by his own consciousness what we now have said, wants the true key to works of genius. He has not penetrated those sacred recesses of the soul, where poetry is born and nourished, and inhales immortal vigour, and wings herself for her heaven-

ward flight. In an intellectual nature, framed for progress and for higher modes of being, there must be creative energies, powers of original and ever-growing thought; and poetry is the form in which these energies are chiefly manifested. It is the glorious prerogative of this art, that it "makes all things new" for the gratification of a divine instinct. It indeed finds its elements in what it actually sees and experiences, in the worlds of matter and mind; but it combines and blends these into new forms and according to new affinities; breaks down, if we may so say, the distinctions and bounds of nature; imparts to material objects life, and sentiment, and emotion, and invests the mind with the powers and splendours of the outward creation; describes the surrounding universe in the colours which the passions throw over it, and depicts the soul in those modes of repose or agitation, of tenderness or sublime emotion, which manifest its thirst for a more powerful and joyful existence. To a man of a literal and prosaic character, the mind may seem lawless in these workings; but it observes higher laws than it transgresses, the laws of the immortal intellect; it is trying and developing its best faculties; and in the objects which it describes, or in the emotions which it awakens, anticipates those states of progressive power, splendour, beauty, and happiness, for which it was created.

We accordingly believe that poetry, far from injuring society, is one of the great instruments of its refinement and exaltation. It lifts the mind above ordinary life, gives it a respite from depressing cares, and awakens the consciousness of its affinity with what is pure and noble. In its legitimate and highest efforts, it has the same tendency and aim with Christianity; that is, to spiritualise our nature. True, poetry has been made the instrument of vice, the pander of bad passions; but when genius thus stoops, it dims its fires, and parts with much of its power; and even when poetry is enslaved to licentiousness or misanthropy, she cannot wholly forget her true vocation. Strains of pure feeling, touches of tenderness, images of innocent happiness, sympathies with suffering virtue, bursts of scorn

or indignation at the hollowness of the world, passages true to our moral nature, often escape in an immoral work, and show us how hard it is for a gifted spirit to divorce itself wholly from what is good. Poetry has a natural alliance with our best affections. It delights in the beauty and sublimity of the outward creation and of the soul. It indeed portrays, with terrible energy, the excesses of the passions; but they are passions which show a mighty nature, which are full of power, which command awe, and excite a deep though shuddering sympathy. Its great tendency and purpose is to carry the mind beyond and above the beaten, dusty, weary walks of ordinary life; to lift it into a purer element; and to breathe into it more profound and generous emotion. It reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of early feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the spring-time of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature by vivid delineations of its tenderest and loftiest feelings, spreads our sympathies over all classes of society, knits us by new ties with universal being, and, through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life.

We are aware, that it is objected to poetry, that it gives wrong views and excites false expectations of life, peoples the mind with shadows and illusions, and builds up imagination on the ruins of wisdom. That there is a wisdom, against which poetry wars, the wisdom of the senses, which makes physical comfort and gratification the supreme good, and wealth the chief interest of life, we do not deny; nor do we deem it the least service which poetry renders to mankind, that it redeems them from the thraldom of this earthborn prudence. But, passing over this topic, we would observe, that the complaint against poetry, as abounding in illusion and deception, is in the main groundless. In many poems there is more of truth than in many histories and philosophic theories. The fictions of genius are often the vehicles of the sublimest verities, and its flashes often open new regions of thought, and throw new light on

the mysteries of our being. In poetry, when the letter is falsehood, the spirit is often profoundest wisdom. And if truth thus dwells in the boldest fictions of the poet, much more may it be expected in his delineations of life; for the present life, which is the first stage of the immortal mind, abounds in the materials of poetry, and it is the high office of the bard to detect this divine element among the grosser labours and pleasures of our earthly being. The present life is not wholly prosaic, precise, tame, and finite. To the gifted eye it abounds in the poetic. The affections which spread beyond ourselves and stretch far into futurity; the workings of mighty passions, which seem to arm the soul with an almost superhuman energy; the innocent and irrepressible joy of infancy; the bloom, and buoyancy, and dazzling hopes of youth; the throbbings of the heart, when it first wakes to love, and dreams of a happiness too vast for earth; woman, with her beauty, and grace, and gentleness, and fulness of feeling, and depth of affection, and blushes of purity, and the tones and looks which only a mother's heart can inspire;—these are all poetical. It is not true that the poet paints a life which does not exist. He only extracts and concentrates, as it were, life's ethereal essence, arrests and condenses its volatile fragrance, brings together its scattered beauties, and prolongs its more refined but evanescent joys. And in this he does well; for it is good to feel that life is not wholly usurped by cares for subsistence, and physical gratifications, but admits, in measures which may be indefinitely enlarged, sentiments and delights worthy of a higher being. This power of poetry to refine our views of life and happiness, is more and more needed as society advances. It is needed to withstand the encroachments of heartless and artificial manners, which make civilisation so tame and uninteresting. It is needed to counteract the tendency of physical science, which being now sought, not, as formerly, for intellectual gratification, but for multiplying bodily comforts, requires a new developement of imagination, taste, and poetry, to preserve men from sinking into an earthly, material, Epicurean life.

Our remarks in vindication of poetry have extended beyond our original design. They have had a higher aim than to assert the dignity of Milton as a poet, and that is, to endear and recommend this divine art to all who reverence and would cultivate and refine their nature.

In delineating Milton's character as a *poet*, we are saved the necessity of looking far for its distinguishing attributes. His name is almost identified with sublimity. He is, in truth, the sublimest of men. He rises, not by effort or discipline, but by a native tendency and a godlike instinct, to the contemplation of objects of grandeur and awfulness. He always moves with a conscious energy. There is no subject so vast or terrific, as to repel or intimidate him. The overpowering grandeur of a theme kindles and attracts him. He enters on the description of the infernal regions with a fearless tread, as if he felt within himself a power to erect the prison-house of fallen spirits, to encircle them with flames and horrors worthy of their crimes, to call forth from them shouts which should tear "hell's concave," and to embody in their Chief an Archangel's energies, and a Demon's pride and hate. Even the stupendous conception of Satan seems never to oppress his faculties. This character of power runs through all Milton's works. His descriptions of nature show a free and bold hand. He has no need of the minute, graphic skill, which we prize in Cowper or Crabbe. With a few strong or delicate touches, he impresses, as it were, his own mind on the scenes which he would describe, and kindles the imagination of the gifted reader to clothe them with the same radiant hues under which they appeared to his own.

This attribute of power is universally felt to characterise Milton. His sublimity is in every man's mouth. Is it felt that his poetry breathes a sensibility and tenderness hardly surpassed by its sublimity? We apprehend that the grandeur of Milton's mind has thrown some shade over his milder beauties; and this it has done, not only by being more striking and imposing, but by the tendency of vast mental energy to give a certain calmness to the expression of tenderness and

leep feeling. A great mind is the master of its own enthusiasm, and does not often break out into those tumults, which pass with many for the signs of profound emotion. Its sensibility, though more intense and enduring, is more self-possessed and less perturbed than that of other men, and is therefore less observed and felt, except by those who understand, through their own consciousness, the workings and utterance of genuine feeling. We might quote pages in illustration of the qualities here ascribed to Milton. Turn to "Comus," one of his earliest productions. What sensibility breathes in the descriptions of the benighted Lady's singing, by Comus and the Spirit!

> "*Comus.*—Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
> Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
> Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
> And with these raptures moves the vocal air
> To testify his hidden residence:
> How sweetly did they float upon the wings
> Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
> At every fall smoothing the raven down
> Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
> My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
> Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
> Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
> Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul
> And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,
> And chid her barking waves into attention,
> And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
> Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
> And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
> But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
> Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
> I never heard till now." *Lines* 244–264.

> "*Spirit.*—At last a soft and solemn breathing sound
> Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
> And stole upon the air, that even Silence
> Was took ere she was 'ware, and wish'd she might
> Deny her nature, and be never more
> Still, to be so displaced. I was all ear,
> And took in strains that might create a soul
> Under the ribs of death." *Lines* 555–563.

In illustration of Milton's tenderness, we will open almost at a venture.

"Now Morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest: He on his side
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then, with voice
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."

Par. Lost, Book V. lines 1–25.

"So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended."

Par. Lost, Book V. lines 129–135.

From this very imperfect view of the qualities of Milton's poetry, we hasten to his great work, "Paradise Lost," perhaps the noblest monument of human genius. The two first books, by universal consent, stand pre-eminent in sublimity. Hell and hell's king have a terrible harmony, and dilate into new grandeur and awfulness, the longer we contemplate them. From one element, "solid and liquid fire," the poet has framed a world of horror and suffering, such as imagination had never traversed. But fiercer flames than those which encompass Satan, burn in his own soul. Revenge, ex-

sperated pride, consuming wrath, ambition, though fallen, yet unconquered by the thunders of the Omnipotent, and grasping still at the empire of the universe,—these form a picture more sublime and terrible than hell. Hell yields to the spirit which it imprisons. The intensity of its fires reveals the intenser passions and more vehement will of Satan; and the ruined archangel gathers into himself the sublimity of the scene which surrounds him. This forms the tremendous interest of these wonderful books. We see mind triumphant over the most terrible powers of nature. We see unutterable agony subdued by energy of soul. We have not indeed in Satan those bursts of passion, which rive the soul as well as shatter the outward frame of Lear. But we have a depth of passion which only an archangel could manifest. The all-enduring, all-defying pride of Satan, assuming so majestically hell's burning throne, and coveting the diadem which scorches his thunder-blasted brow, is a creation requiring in its author almost the spiritual energy with which he invests the fallen seraph. Some have doubted whether the moral effect of such delineations of the storms and terrible workings of the soul is good; whether the interest felt in a spirit so transcendently evil as Satan, favours our sympathies with virtue. But our interest fastens, in this and like cases, on what is not evil. We gaze on Satan with an awe not unmixed with mysterious pleasure, as on a miraculous manifestation of the *power of mind.* What chains us, as with a resistless spell, in such a character, is spiritual might made visible by the racking pains which it overpowers. There is something kindling and ennobling in the consciousness, however awakened, of the energy which resides in mind; and many a virtuous man has borrowed new strength from the force, constancy, and dauntless courage of evil agents.

Milton's description of Satan attests in various ways the power of his genius. Critics have often observed, that the great difficulty of his work, was to reconcile the spiritual properties of his supernatural beings with the human modes of existence, which he is obliged

to ascribe to them. The difficulty is too great for any genius wholly to overcome, and we must acknowledge that our enthusiasm is in some parts of the poem checked by a feeling of incongruity between the spiritual agent, and his sphere and mode of agency. But we are visited with no such chilling doubts and misgivings in the description of Satan in hell. Imagination has here achieved its highest triumph, in imparting a character of reality and truth to its most daring creations. That world of horrors, though material, is yet so remote from our ordinary nature, that a spiritual being, exiled from heaven, finds there an appropriate home. There is, too, an indefiniteness in the description of Satan's person, which excites without shocking the imagination, and aids us to reconcile in our conception of him, a human form with his superhuman attributes. To the production of this effect, much depends on the first impression given by the poet; for this is apt to follow us through the whole work; and here we think Milton eminently successful. The first glimpse of Satan is given us in the following lines, which, whilst too indefinite to provoke, and too sublime to allow, the scrutiny of the reason, fill the imagination of the reader with a form which can hardly be effaced.

> "Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate
> With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
> That sparkling blazed, his other parts besides
> Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
> Lay floating many a rood."
>
> *Par. Lost, Book I. lines* 192–196.

> "Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
> His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
> Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
> In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale."
>
> *Lines* 221–224.

We have more which we would gladly say of the delineation of Satan; especially of the glimpses which are now and then given of his deep anguish and despair, and of the touches of better feelings which are skilfully thrown into the dark picture, both suited and designed to blend with our admiration, dread, and

abhorrence, a measure of that sympathy and interest, with which every living thinking being ought to be regarded, and without which all other feelings tend to sin and pain. But there is another topic which we cannot leave untouched. From hell we flee to Paradise, a region as lovely as hell is terrible, and which to those who do not know the universality of true genius, will appear doubly wonderful, when considered as the creation of the same mind which had painted the infernal world.

Paradise and its inhabitants are in sweet accordance, and together form a scene of tranquil bliss, which calms and soothes, whilst it delights the imagination. Adam and Eve, just moulded by the hand, and quickened by the breath of God, reflect in their countenances and forms, as well as minds, the intelligence, benignity, and happiness of their Author. Their new existence has the freshness and peacefulness of the dewy morning. Their souls, unsated and untainted, find an innocent joy in the youthful creation, which spreads and smiles around them. Their mutual love is deep, for it is the love of young, unworn, unexhausted hearts, which meet in each other the only human objects on whom to pour forth their fulness of affection; and still it is serene, for it is the love of happy beings, who know not suffering even by name, whose innocence excludes not only the tumults but the thought of jealousy and shame, who, "imparadised in one another's arms," scarce dream of futurity, so blessed is their present being. We will not say that we envy our first parents; for we feel that there may be higher happiness than theirs, a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and wide-spread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of "thoughts which wander through eternity." Still there are times, when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for the "wings of a dove, that it might fly away" and take refuge amidst the "shady bowers," the

"vernal airs," the "roses without thorns," the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden. It is the contrast of this deep peace of Paradise with the storms of life, which gives to the fourth and fifth books of this poem a charm so irresistible, that not a few would sooner relinquish the two first books, with all their sublimity, than part with these. It has sometimes been said, that the English language has no good pastoral poetry. We would ask, in what age or country has the pastoral reed breathed such sweet strains as are borne to us on "the odoriferous wings of gentle gales" from Milton's Paradise?

We should not fulfil our duty, were we not to say one word on what has been justly celebrated, the harmony of Milton's versification. His numbers have the prime charm of expressiveness. They vary with, and answer to, the depth, or tenderness, or sublimity of his conceptions, and hold intimate alliance with the soul. Like Michael Angelo, in whose hands the marble was said to be flexible, he bends our language, which foreigners reproach with hardness, into whatever forms the subject demands. All the treasures of sweet and solemn sound are at his command. Words, harsh and discordant in the writings of less gifted men, flow through his poetry in a full stream of harmony. This power over language is not to be ascribed to Milton's musical ear. It belongs to the soul. It is a gift or exercise of genius, which has power to impress itself on whatever it touches, and finds or frames in sounds, motions, and material forms, correspondences and harmonies with its own fervid thoughts and feelings.

We close our remarks on Milton's poetry with observing, that it is characterised by seriousness. Great and various as are its merits, it does not discover all the variety of genius which we find in Shakspeare, whose imagination revelled equally in regions of mirth, beauty, and terror, now evoking spectres, now sporting with fairies, and now "ascending the highest heaven of invention." Milton was cast on times too solemn and eventful, was called to take part in transactions too perilous, and had too perpetual need of the presence of high thoughts and motives, to indulge himself in light

and gay creations, even had his genius been more flexible and sportive. But Milton's poetry, though habitually serious, is always healthful, and bright, and vigorous. It has no gloom. He took no pleasure in drawing dark pictures of life; for he knew by experience, that there is a power in the soul to transmute calamity into an occasion of nutriment of moral power and triumphant virtue. We find nowhere in his writings that whining sensibility and exaggeration of morbid feeling, which makes so much of modern poetry effeminating. If he is not gay, he is not spirit-broken. His "L'Allegro" proves, that he understood thoroughly the bright and joyous aspects of nature; and in his "Penseroso," where he was tempted to accumulate images of gloom, we learn that the saddest views which he took of creation, are such as inspire only pensive musing or lofty contemplation.

From Milton's poetry, we turn to his *prose*. We rejoice that the dust is beginning to be wiped from his prose writings, and that the public are now learning, what the initiated have long known, that these contain passages hardly inferior to his best poetry, and that they are throughout marked with the same vigorous mind which gave us Paradise Lost. The attention to these works has been discouraged by some objections, on which we shall bestow a few remarks.

And, first, it is objected to his prose writings, that the style is difficult and obscure, abounding in involutions, transpositions, and Latinisms; that his protracted sentences exhaust and weary the mind, and too often yield it no better recompense than confused and indistinct perceptions. We mean not to deny that these charges have some grounds; but they seem to us much exaggerated; and when we consider that the difficulties of Milton's style have almost sealed up his prose writings, we cannot but lament the fastidiousness and effeminacy of modern readers. We know that simplicity and perspicuity are important qualities of style; but there are vastly nobler and more important ones; such as energy and richness, and in these Milton is not surpassed. The best style is not that which puts the

reader most easily and in the shortest time in possession of a writer's naked thoughts; but that which is the truest image of a great intellect, which conveys fully and carries farthest into other souls the conceptions and feelings of a profound and lofty spirit. To be universally intelligible is not the highest merit. A great mind cannot, without injurious constraint, shrink itself to the grasp of common passive readers. Its natural movement is free, bold, and majestic, and it ought not to be required to part with these attributes that the multitude may keep pace with it. A full mind will naturally overflow in long sentences, and in the moment of inspiration, when thick-coming thoughts and images crowd upon it, will often pour them forth in a splendid confusion, dazzling to common readers, but kindling to congenial spirits. There are writings which are clear through their shallowness. We must not expect in the ocean the transparency of the calm inland stream. For ourselves, we love what is called easy reading perhaps too well, especially in our hours of relaxation; but we love too to have our faculties tasked by master spirits. We delight in long sentences, in which a great truth, instead of being broken up into numerous periods, is spread out in its full proportions, is irradiated with variety of illustration and imagery, is set forth in a splendid affluence of language, and flows, like a full stream, with a majestic harmony which fills at once the ear and the soul. Such sentences are worthy and noble manifestations of a great and far-looking mind, which grasps at once vast fields of thought, just as the natural eye takes in at a moment wide prospects of grandeur and beauty. We would not indeed have all compositions of this character. Let abundant provision be made for the common intellect. Let such writers as Addison, an honoured name, "bring down philosophy from heaven to earth." But let inspired genius fulfil its higher function of lifting the prepared mind from earth to heaven. Impose upon it no strict laws, for it is its own best law. Let it speak in its own language, in tones which suit its own ear. Let it not lay aside its natural port, or dwarf itself that it may be comprehended

by the surrounding multitude. If not understood and relished now, let it place a generous confidence in other ages, and utter oracles which futurity will expound. We are led to these remarks, not merely for Milton's justification, but because our times seem to demand them. Literature, we fear, is becoming too popular. The whole community is now turned into readers, and in this we heartily rejoice; and we rejoice too that so much talent is employed in making knowledge accessible to all. We hail the general diffusion of intelligence as the brightest feature of the present age. But good and evil are never disjoined; and one bad consequence of the multitude of readers, is, that men of genius are too anxious to please the multitude, and prefer a present shout of popularity to that less tumultuous, but deeper, more thrilling note of the trump of Fame, which resounds and grows clearer and louder through all future ages.

We now come to a much more serious objection to Milton's prose writings, and that is, that they are disfigured by party spirit, coarse invective, and controversial asperity; and here we are prepared to say, that there are passages in these works which every admirer of his character must earnestly desire to expunge. Milton's alleged virulence was manifested towards private and public foes. The first, such as Salmasius and Morus, deserved no mercy. They poured out on his spotless character torrents of calumny, charging him with the blackest vices of the heart and the foulest enormities of the life. It ought to be added, that the manners and spirit of Milton's age justified a retaliation on such offenders, which the more courteous, and, we will hope, more Christian spirit of the present times will not tolerate. Still we mean not to be his apologists. Milton, raised as he was above his age, and fortified with the consciousness of high virtue, ought to have been, both to his own and future times, an example of Christian equanimity. In regard to the public enemies whom he assailed, we mean the despots in church and state, and the corrupt institutions which had stirred up a civil war, the general strain of his writings, though strong and stern,

must exalt him, notwithstanding his occasional violence, among the friends of civil and religious liberty. That liberty was in peril. Great evils were struggling for perpetuity, and could only be broken down by great power. Milton felt that interests of infinite moment were at stake; and who will blame him for binding himself to them with the whole energy of his great mind, and for defending them with fervour and vehemence? We must not mistake Christian benevolence, as if it had but one voice, that of soft entreaty. It can speak in piercing and awful tones. There is constantly going on in our world a conflict between good and evil. The cause of human nature has always to wrestle with foes. All improvement is a victory won by struggles. It is especially true of those great periods which have been distinguished by revolutions in government and religion, and from which we date the most rapid movements of the human mind, that they have been signalised by conflict. Thus Christianity convulsed the world and grew up amidst storms; and the Reformation of Luther was a signal to universal war; and Liberty in both worlds has encountered opposition, over which she has triumphed only through her own immortal energies. At such periods, men, gifted with great power of thought and loftiness of sentiment, are especially summoned to the conflict with evil. They hear, as it were, in their own magnanimity and generous aspirations, the voice of a divinity; and thus commissioned, and burning with a passionate devotion to truth and freedom, they must and will speak with an indignant energy, and they ought not to be measured by the standard of ordinary minds in ordinary times. Men of natural softness and timidity, of a sincere but effeminate virtue, will be apt to look on these bolder, hardier spirits, as violent, perturbed, and uncharitable; and the charge will not be wholly groundless. But that deep feeling of evils, which is necessary to effectual conflict with them, and which marks God's most powerful messengers to mankind, cannot breathe itself in soft and tender accents. The deeply moved soul will speak strongly, and ought to speak so as to move and shake nations.

We have offered these remarks as strongly applicable to Milton. He reverenced and loved human nature, and attached himself to its great interests with a fervour of which only such a mind was capable. He lived in one of those solemn periods which determine the character of ages to come. His spirit was stirred to its very centre by the presence of danger. He lived in the midst of the battle. That the ardour of his spirit sometimes passed the bounds of wisdom and charity, and poured forth unwarrantable invective, we see and lament. But the purity and loftiness of his mind break forth amidst his bitterest invectives. We see a noble nature still. We see that no feigned love of truth and freedom was a covering for selfishness and malignity. He did indeed love and adore uncorrupted religion and intellectual liberty, and let his name be enrolled among their truest champions. Milton has told us, in his own noble style, that he entered on his principal controversy with episcopacy, reluctantly and only through a deep conviction of duty. The introduction to the second book of his "Reason of Church Government," shows us the workings of his mind on this subject, and is his best vindication from the charge we are now repelling. He says—

"Surely to every good and peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing, to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; much better would it like him, doubtless, to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. * * * This I foresee, that should the church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed, or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents which God at that present had lent me; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach. 'Timorous and ungrateful, the church of God is now again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou bewailest; what matters it for thee or thy bewailing? When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable

of all that thou hast read or studied, to utter in her behalf. Yet ease and leisure was given thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of other men. Thou hadst the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God, and his church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if he could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee.' * * * But now by this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the church, if she should suffer, when others that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honour to be admitted mourners. But, if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have my charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs.

"Concerning therefore this wayward subject against prelaty, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me, when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours."

Vol. I. p. 139–141.*

He then goes on to speak of his consciousness of possessing great poetical powers, which he was most anxious to cultivate. Of these he speaks thus magnificently.

"These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, but yet to some, though most abuse, in every nation; and are of power,—to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and public civility—to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune—to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church—to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ—to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship,—lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and

* From the introduction to the second book of "The Reason of Church Government, &c." Vol. I. p. 137, &c. of "A Selection from the English Prose Works of John Milton, Boston, 1826"—to which all our references are made.

sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe."

Vol. I. p. 145, 146.

He then gives intimations of his having proposed to himself a great poetical work, "a work," he says—

"Not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." *Vol. I. p.* 148.

He then closes with a passage, showing from what principles he forsook these delightful studies for controversy.

"I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies. * * * But were it the meanest underservice, if God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labours of the church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions, till coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either strait perjure or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." *Vol. I. p.* 149.

These passages, replete with Milton's genius and greatness of soul, show us the influences and motives under which his prose works were written, and help us to interpret passages, which, if taken separately, might justify us in ascribing to him a character of excessive indignation and scorn.

Milton's most celebrated prose work is his "Areopagitica, or a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," a noble work indeed, a precious manual of freedom, an arsenal of immortal weapons for the defence of man's highest prerogative, intellectual liberty. His "Reformation in England" and "Reason of Church Government," are the most important theological treatises published during his life. They were his earliest prose compositions, and thrown off with much haste, and on these accounts are more chargeable with defects of style than any other of his writings. But these, with all their defects, abound in strong and elevated thought, and in power and felicity of expression. Their great blemish is an inequality of style, often springing from the conflict and opposition of the impulses under which he wrote. It is not uncommon to find in the same sentence, his affluent genius pouring forth magnificent images and expressions, and suddenly his deep scorn for his opponents, suggesting and throwing into the midst of this splendour, sarcasms and degrading comparisons altogether at variance with the general strain. From this cause, and from negligence, many powerful passages in his prose writings are marred by an incongruous mixture of unworthy allusions and phrases. In the close of his first work, that on "Reformation in England," he breaks out into an invocation and prayer to the Supreme Being, from which we extract a passage containing a remarkable intimation of his having meditated some great poetical enterprise from his earliest years, and giving full promise of that grandeur of thought and language, which characterises "Paradise Lost." Having "lifted up his hands to that eternal and propitious Throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal suppliants," and besought God to perfect the work of civil and religious deliverance begun in England, he proceeds thus:—

"Then, amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, *some one may perhaps be heard* offering at high strains in new and lofty measures, to sing and celebrate thy divine mercies, and marvellous judgments in this land throughout all ages, whereby this great and warlike nation, instructed and inured to the fervent and continual practice of truth and righteousness, and

casting far from her the rags of her old vices, may press on hard to that high and happy emulation to be found the soberest, wisest, and most Christian people at that day, when Thou, the eternal and shortly expected King, shalt open the clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and distributing national honours and rewards to religious and just commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; where they undoubtedly, that by their labours, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion and their country, shall receive above the inferior orders of the blessed, the regal addition of principalities, legions, and thrones into their glorious titles, and, in supereminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss, in overmeasure for ever." *Vol. I. p.* 69, 70.

We have not time to speak of Milton's political treatises. We close our brief remarks on his prose writings, with recommending them to all who can enjoy great beauties in the neighbourhood of great faults, and who would learn the compass, energy, and richness of our language; and still more do we recommend them to those, who desire to nourish in their breast magnanimity of sentiment and an unquenchable love of freedom. They bear the impress of that seal, by which genius distinguishes its productions from works of learning and taste. The great and decisive test of genius, is, that it calls forth *power* in the souls of others. It not merely gives knowledge, but breathes energy. There are authors, and among these Milton holds the highest rank, in approaching whom we are conscious of an access of intellectual strength. A "virtue goes out" from them. We discern more clearly, not merely because a new light is thrown over objects, but because our own vision is strengthened. Sometimes a single word, spoken by the voice of genius, goes far into the heart. A hint, a suggestion, an undefined delicacy of expression, teaches more than we gather from volumes of less gifted men. The works which we should chiefly study, are not those which contain the greatest fund of knowledge, but which raise us into sympathy with the intellectual energy of the author, and through which a great mind multiplies itself, as it were, in the reader.

Milton's prose works are imbued as really, if not as thoroughly, as his poetry, with this quickening power, and they will richly reward those who are receptive of this influence.

We now leave the writings of Milton to offer a few remarks on his *moral* qualities. His moral character was as strongly marked as his intellectual, and it may be expressed in one word, *magnanimity*. It was in harmony with his poetry. He had a passionate love of the higher, more commanding, and majestic virtues, and fed his youthful mind with meditations on the perfection of a human being. In a letter written to an Italian friend before his thirtieth year, and translated by Hayley, we have this vivid picture of his aspirations after virtue.

"As to other points, what God may have determined for me I know not; but this I know, that if he ever instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the breast of any man, he has instilled it into mine. Ceres, in the fable, pursued not her daughter with a greater keenness of inquiry, than I day and night the idea of perfection. Hence, wherever I find a man despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom, through every age, has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment; and if I am so influenced by nature or destiny, that by no exertion or labours of my own I may exalt myself to this summit of worth and honour, yet no powers of heaven or earth will hinder me from looking with reverence and affection upon those, who have thoroughly attained this glory, or appeared engaged in the successful pursuit of it."

His Comus was written in his twenty-sixth year, and on reading this exquisite work our admiration is awakened, not so much by observing how the whole spirit of poetry had descended on him at that early age, as by witnessing how his whole youthful soul was penetrated, awed, and lifted up by the austere charms, "the radiant light," the invincible power, the celestial peace of saintly virtue. He reverenced moral purity and elevation, not only for its own sake, but as the inspirer of intellect, and especially of the higher efforts of poetry. "I was confirmed," he says in his usual noble style—

"I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable

things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing of high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy." *Vol. I. p.* 237, 238.

We learn from his works, that he used his multifarious reading to build up within himself this reverence for virtue. Ancient history, the sublime musings of Plato, and the heroic self-abandonment of chivalry, joined their influences with prophets and apostles, in binding him "everlastingly in willing homage" to the great, the honourable, and the lovely in character. A remarkable passage to this effect, we quote from his account of his youth.

"I betook me among those lofty fables and romances, which recount in solemn cantos, the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood or of his life, if it so befell him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn. * * * So that even these, books which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and steadfast observation of virtue." *Vol. I. p.* 238, 239.

All Milton's habits were expressive of a refined and self-denying character. When charged by his unprincipled slanderers with licentious habits, he thus gives an account of his morning hours.

"Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring, in winter often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labour or devotion; in summer as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary or memory have its full fraught; then with useful and generous labours preserving the body's health and hardiness, to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind, to the cause of religion, and our country's liberty, when it shall require firm hearts in sound bodies to stand and cover their stations, rather than to see the ruin of our protestation, and the enforcement of a slavish life." *Vol. I. p.* 238.

We have enlarged on the strictness and loftiness of Milton's virtue, not only from our interest in the subject, but that we may put to shame and silence, those men who make genius an apology for vice, and take the sacred fire, kindled by God within them, to inflame men's passions, and to minister to a vile sensuality.

We see Milton's greatness of mind in his fervent and constant attachment to liberty. Freedom, in all its forms and branches, was dear to him, but especially freedom of thought and speech, of conscience and worship, freedom to seek, profess, and propagate truth. The liberty of ordinary politicians, which protects men's outward rights, and removes restraints from the pursuit of property and outward good, fell very short of that for which Milton lived, and was ready to die. The tyranny which he hated most, was that which broke the intellectual and moral power of the community. The worst feature of the institutions which he assailed, was, that they fettered the mind. He felt within himself that the human mind had a principle of perpetual growth, that it was essentially diffusive and made for progress, and he wished every chain broken, that it might run the race of truth and virtue with increasing ardour and success. This attachment to a spiritual and refined freedom, which never forsook him in the hottest controversies, contributed greatly to protect his genius, imagination, taste, and sensibility, from the withering and polluting influences of public station, and of the rage of parties. It threw a hue of poetry over politics, and gave a sublime reference to his service of the commonwealth. The fact that Milton, in that stormy day, and amidst the trials of public office, kept his high faculties undepraved, was a proof of no common greatness. Politics, however they make the intellect active, sagacious, and inventive, within a certain sphere, generally extinguish its thirst for universal truth, paralyse sentiment and imagination, corrupt the simplicity of the mind, destroy that confidence in human virtue which lies at the foundation of philanthropy and generous sacrifices, and end in cold and prudent selfishness. Milton passed through a revolution, which, in its last stages

and issue, was peculiarly fitted to damp enthusiasm, to scatter the visions of hope, and to infuse doubts of the reality of virtuous principle; and yet the ardour and moral feeling, and enthusiasm of his youth, came forth unhurt, and even exalted from the trial.

Before quitting the subject of Milton's devotion to liberty, it ought to be recorded, that he wrote his celebrated "Defence of the People of England," after being distinctly forewarned by his physicians, that the effect of this exertion would be the utter loss of sight. His reference to this part of his history, in a short poetical effusion, is too characteristic to be withheld. It is inscribed to Cyriac Skinner, the friend to whom he appears to have confided his lately discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine."

"Cyriac, this three-years-day these eyes, though clear
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask,
Content though blind, had I no better guide."

Sonnet 22.

We see Milton's magnanimity in the circumstances under which "Paradise Lost" was written. It was not in prosperity, in honour, and amidst triumphs, but in disappointment, desertion, and in what the world calls disgrace, that he composed that work. The cause with which he had identified himself, had failed. His friends were scattered; liberty was trodden under foot; and her devoted champion was a by-word among the triumphant royalists. But it is the prerogative of true greatness to glorify itself in adversity, and to meditate and execute vast enterprises in defeat. Milton, fallen in outward condition, afflicted with blindness, disappointed in his best hopes, applied himself with characteristic

energy to the sublimest achievement of intellect, solacing himself with great thoughts, with splendid creations, and with a prophetic confidence, that however neglected in his own age, he was framing in his works a bond of union and fellowship with the illustrious spirits of a brighter day. We delight to contemplate him in his retreat and last years. To the passing spectator, he seemed fallen and forsaken, and his blindness was reproached as a judgment from God. But though sightless, he lived in light. His inward eye ranged through universal nature, and his imagination shed on it brighter beams than the sun. Heaven, and hell, and paradise were open to him. He visited past ages, and gathered round him ancient sages and heroes, prophets and apostles, brave knights and gifted bards. As he looked forward, ages of liberty dawned and rose to his view, and he felt that he was about to bequeath to them an inheritance of genius, "which would not fade away," and was to live in the memory, reverence, and love of remotest generations.

We have enlarged on Milton's character, not only from the pleasure of paying that sacred debt which the mind owes to him who has quickened and delighted it, but from an apprehension that Milton has not yet reaped his due harvest of esteem and veneration. The mists which the prejudices and bigotry of Johnson spread over his bright name, are not yet wholly scattered, though fast passing away. We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the *manes* of another. But we owe it to Milton and to other illustrious names, to say, that Johnson has failed of the highest end of biography, which is to give immortality to virtue, and to call forth fervent admiration towards those who have shed splendour on past ages. We acquit Johnson, however, of intentional misrepresentation. He did not, and could not, appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively "of the earth," whilst

Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary, in the day of Johnson's glory, to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty, but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. Milton, on the other hand, burned with a deep, yet calm love of moral grandeur and celestial purity. He thought, not so much of what man is, as of what he might become. His own mind was a revelation to him of a higher condition of humanity, and to promote this he thirsted and toiled for freedom, as the element for the growth and improvement of his nature. In religion, Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned towards absolute power; and the idea of reforming either, never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. The church and the civil polity under which he lived, seemed to him perfect, unless he may have thought that the former would be improved by a larger infusion of Romish rites and doctrines, and the latter by an enlargement of the royal prerogative. Hence, a tame acquiescence in the present forms of religion and government, marks his works. Hence, we find so little in his writings which is electric and soul-kindling, and which gives the reader a consciousness of being made for a state of loftier thought and feeling than the present. Milton's whole soul, on the contrary, revolted against the maxims of legitimacy, hereditary faith, and servile reverence for established power. He could not brook the bondage to which men had bowed for ages. "Reformation" was the first word of public warning which broke from his youthful lips, and the hope of it was the solace of his declining years. The difference between Milton and Johnson, may be traced, not only in these great features of mind, but in their whole characters. Milton was refined and spiritual in his habits, temperate almost to abstemiousness, and refreshed himself after intellectual effort by music. John-

son inclined to more sensual delights. Milton was exquisitely alive to the outward creation, to sounds, motions, and forms, to natural beauty and grandeur. Johnson, through defect of physical organization, if not through deeper deficiency, had little susceptibility of these pure and delicate pleasures, and would not have exchanged the Strand for the vale of Tempe or the gardens of the Hesperides. How could Johnson be just to Milton! The comparison which we have instituted, has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects. But we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action, and the solemn pathos which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history, command our willing admiration. That he wanted enthusiasm and creative imagination and lofty sentiment, was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We love intellectual power in all its forms, and delight in the variety of mind. We blame him only that his passions, prejudices, and bigotry, engaged him in the unworthy task of obscuring the brighter glory of one of the most gifted and virtuous men. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect; for they were results, to a degree which man cannot estimate, of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy physical temperament, and belonged to the body more than to the mind. We only ask the friends of genius not to put their faith in Johnson's delineations of it. His biographical works are tinged with his notoriously strong prejudices, and of all his "Lives," we hold that of Milton to be the most apocryphal.

We here close our general remarks on Milton's intellectual and moral qualities. We venerate him as a man of genius, but still more as a man of magnanimity and Christian virtue, who regarded genius and poetry as sacred gifts, imparted to him, not to amuse men or to build up a reputation, but that he might quicken and call

forth what was great and divine in his fellow-creatures, and might secure the only true fame, the admiration of minds which his writings were to kindle and exalt.

We come now to the examination of the newly discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine." This work, we have said, owes its chief interest to the character of its author. From its very nature, it cannot engage and fix general attention. It consists very much of collections of texts of Scripture, which, however exciting in their proper places, are read with little thought or emotion when taken from their ordinary connexion, and marshalled under systematic heads. Milton aims to give us the doctrines of revelation in its own words. We have them in a phraseology long familiar to us, and we are disappointed; for we expected to see them, not in the language of the Bible, but as existing in the mind of Milton, modified by his peculiar intellect and sensibility, combined and embodied with his various knowledge, illustrated by the analogies, brightened by the new lights, and clothed with the associations, with which they were surrounded by this gifted man. We hoped to see these doctrines as they were viewed by Milton in his moments of solemn feeling and deep contemplation, when they pervaded and moved his whole soul. Still there are passages in which Milton's mind is laid open to us. We refer to the parts of the work, where the peculiarity of his opinions obliges him to state his reasons for adopting them; and these we value highly for the vigour and independence of intellect with which they are impressed. The work is plain and unambitious in style. Its characteristics are a calm earnestness, and that profound veneration for Scripture, which certain denominations of Christians, who have little congeniality with Milton, seem to claim as a monopoly.

His introduction is worthy every man's attention, as a deliberate, mild assertion of the dearest right of human nature, that of free iuquiry.

"If I communicate the result of my inquiries to the world at large; if, as God is my witness, it be with a friendly and

benignant feeling towards mankind, that I readily give as wide a circulation as possible to what I esteem my best and richest possession, I hope to meet with a candid reception from all parties, and that none at least will take unjust offence, even though many things should be brought to light, which will at once be seen to differ from certain received opinions. I earnestly beseech all lovers of truth, not to cry out that the church is thrown into confusion by that freedom of discussion and inquiry, which is granted to the schools, and ought certainly to be refused to no believer, since we are ordered *to prove all things*, and since the daily progress of the light of truth is productive, far less of disturbance to the church, than of illumination and edification." *Vol. I. p.* 5, 6.

"It has also been my object to make it appear from the opinions I shall be found to have advanced, whether new or old, of how much consequence to the Christian religion is the liberty, not only of winnowing and sifting every doctrine, but also of thinking and even writing respecting it, according to our individual faith and persuasion; an inference which will be stronger in proportion to the weight and importance of those opinions, or rather in proportion to the authority of Scripture, on the abundant testimony of which they rest. Without this liberty there is neither religion nor gospel—force alone prevails, by which it is disgraceful for the Christian religion to be supported. Without this liberty we are still enslaved, not indeed, as formerly, under the divine law, but, what is worst of all, under the law of man, or to speak more truly, under a barbarous tyranny." *Vol. I. p.* 7, 8.

On that great subject, the character of God, Milton has given nothing particularly worthy of notice, except that he is more disposed than Christians in general, to conceive of the Supreme Being under the forms and affections of human nature.

"If God habitually assign to himself the members and form of man, why should we be afraid of attributing to him what he attributes to himself, so long as what is imperfection and weakness, when viewed in reference to ourselves, be considered as most complete and excellent whenever it is imputed to God?" *Vol. I. p.* 23.

Milton is not the first Christian who has thought to render the Supreme Being more interesting by giving him human shape. We doubt the wisdom of this expedient. To spiritualise our conceptions of him, seems to us the true process for strengthening our intimacy with him; for in this way only can we think of him as

immediately present to our minds. As far as we give him a material form, we must assign to him a place, and that place will almost necessarily be a distant one, and thus we shall remove him from the soul, which is his true temple. Besides, a definite form clashes with God's infinity, which is his supreme distinction, and on no account to be obscured; for, strange as it may seem to those who know not their own nature, this incomprehensible attribute is that which above all things constitutes the correspondence or adaptation, if we may so speak, of God to the human mind.

In treating of God's efficiency, Milton strenuously maintains human freedom, in opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. He maintains that God's decrees do not encroach on moral liberty; for our free agency is the very object decreed and predestined by the Creator. He maintains that some of the passages of Scripture which speak of election, are to be understood of an election to outward privileges, not to everlasting life; and that in other texts, which relate to the future state, the election spoken of, is not an arbitrary choice of individuals, but of that class or description of persons, be it large or small, who shall comply with the prescribed terms of salvation; in other words, it is a conditional, not an absolute election, and such that every individual, if he will, may be included in it. Milton has so far told us truth. We wish that we could add, that he had thrown new light on free agency. This great subject has indeed baffled as yet the deepest thinkers, and seems now to be consigned, with other sublime topics, under the sweeping denomination of "metaphysics," to general neglect. But let it not be given up in despair. The time is coming, when the human intellect is to strike into new fields, and to view itself and its Creator and the universe, from new positions, and we trust that the darkness which has so long hung over our moral nature wlll be gradually dispersed. This attribute of free agency, through which an intelligent being is strictly and properly a cause, an agent, an originator of moral good or moral evil, and not a mere machine, determined by outward influences, or by

a secret, yet resistless efficiency of God, which virtually makes Him the author and sole author of all human actions—this moral freedom, which is the best image of the creative energy of the Deity, seems to us the noblest object of philosophical investigation. However questioned and darkened by a host of metaphysicians, it is recognised in the common consciousness of every human being. It is the ground of responsibility, the fountain of moral feeling. It is involved in all moral judgments and affections, and thus gives to social life its whole interest; whilst it is the chief tie between the soul and its Creator. The fact that philosophers have attempted to discard free agency from their explanations of moral phenomena, and to subject all human action to necessity, to mechanical causes, or other extraneous influences, is proof enough, that the science of the mind has as yet penetrated little beneath the surface, that the depths of the soul are still unexplored.

Milton naturally passes from his chapter on the Supreme Being, to the consideration of those topics which have always been connected with this part of theology; we mean, the character of Jesus Christ, and the nature of the Holy Spirit. All our readers are probably aware that Milton has here declared himself an Anti-trinitarian, and strenuously asserted the strict and proper unity of God. His chapter on "The Son of God," is the most elaborate one in the work. His "prefatory remarks" are highly interesting, as joining with a manly assertion of his right, an affectionate desire to conciliate the Christians from whom he differed.

"I cannot enter upon subjects of so much difficulty as the *Son of God* and the *Holy Spirit*, without again premising a few introductory words. If indeed I were a member of the Church of Rome, which requires implicit obedience to its creed on all points of faith, I should have acquiesced from education or habit in its simple decree and authority, even though it denies that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now received, is capable of being proved from any passage of Scripture. But since I enrol myself among the number of those who acknowledge the Word of God alone as the rule of faith, and freely advance what appears to me much more clearly deducible from the Holy Scriptures than the commonly received opinion, I see no reason why any one who belongs to the same Protestant or Reformed

Church, and professes to acknowledge the same rule of faith as myself, should take offence at my freedom, particularly as I impose my authority on no one, but merely propose what I think more worthy of belief than the creed in general acceptation. I only entreat that my readers will ponder and examine my statements, in a spirit which desires to discover nothing but the truth, and with a mind free from prejudice. For without intending to oppose the authority of Scripture, which I consider inviolably sacred, I only take upon myself to refute human interpretations as often as the occasion requires, conformably to my right, or rather to my duty, as a man. If indeed those with whom I have to contend, were able to produce direct attestation from Heaven to the truth of the doctrine which they espouse, it would be nothing less than impiety to venture to raise, I do not say a clamour, but so much as a murmur against it. But inasmuch as they can lay claim to nothing more than human powers, assisted by that spiritual illumination which is common to all, it is not unreasonable that they should on their part allow the privileges of diligent research and free discussion to another inquirer, who is seeking truth through the same means and in the same way as themselves, and whose desire of benefiting mankind is equal to their own." *Vol. I. p.* 103–105.

Milton teaches, that the Son of God is a distinct being from God, and inferior to him, that he existed before the world was made, that he is the first of the creation of God, and that afterwards all other things were made by him, as the instrument or minister of his Father. He maintains, in agreement with Dr. Clarke, that the Holy Spirit is a person, an intelligent agent, but created and inferior to God. This opinion of Milton is the more remarkable, because he admits that, before the time of Christ, the Jews, though accustomed to the phrase Holy Spirit, never attached to it the idea of personality, and that both in the Old and the New Testament, it is often used to express God himself, or his power and agency. It is strange, that after these concessions, he could have found a difficulty in giving a figurative interpretation to the few passages in the New Testament, which speak of the Holy Spirit as a person.

We are unable within our limits to give a sketch of Milton's strong reasoning against the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ. We must, however, pause a moment

to thank God that he has raised up this illustrious advocate of the long obscured doctrine of the Divine Unity. We can now bring forward the three greatest and noblest minds of modern times, and, we may add, of the Christian era, as witnesses to that Great Truth, of which, in an humbler and narrower sphere, we desire to be the defenders. Our Trinitarian adversaries are perpetually ringing in our ears the names of Fathers and Reformers. We take Milton, Locke, and Newton, and place them in our front, and want no others to oppose to the whole array of great names on the opposite side. Before these intellectual suns, the stars of self-named Orthodoxy "hide their diminished heads." To these eminent men God communicated such unusual measures of light and mental energy, that their names spring up spontaneously, when we think or would speak of the greatness of our nature. Their theological opinions were the fruits of patient, profound, reverent study of the Scriptures. They came to this work, with minds not narrowed by a technical, professional education, but accustomed to broad views, to the widest range of thought. They were shackled by no party connexions. They were warped by no clerical ambition, and subdued by no clerical timidity. They came to this subject in the fulness of their strength, with free minds open to truth, and with unstained purity of life. They came to it in an age, when the doctrine of the Trinity was instilled by education, aud upheld by the authority of the church, and by penal laws. And what did these great and good men, whose intellectual energy and love of truth have made them the chief benefactors of the human mind, what, we ask, did they discover in the Scriptures?—a triple divinity?—three infinite agents?—three infinite objects of worship?—three persons, each of whom possesses his own distinct offices, and yet shares equally in the godhead with the rest? No! Scripture joined with nature and with that secret voice in the heart, which even idolatry could not always stifle, and taught them to bow reverently before the One Infinite Father, and to ascribe to Him alone, supreme, self-existent divinity. Our principal object in these remarks, has

:en to show, that as far as great names are arguments, e cause of Anti-trinitarianism, or of God's proper nity, is supported by the strongest. But we owe it truth to say, that we put little trust in these fashion- ıle proofs. The chief use of great names in religious ntroversy, is, to balance and neutralise one another, at the unawed and unfettered mind may think and dge with a due self-reverence, and with a solemn nse of accountableness to God alone.

We have called Milton an Anti-trinitarian. But we ve no desire to identify him with any sect. His mind ıs too independent and universal to narrow itself to man creeds and parties. He is supposed to have parated himself, in his last years, from all the denom- ıtions around him; and were he now living, we are t sure that he would find one to which he would strongly attracted. He would probably stand first ıong that class of Christians, more numerous than is pposed, and, we hope, increasing, who are too jealous the rights of the mind, and too dissatisfied with the ıshing systems of the age, to attach themselves close- to any party; in whom the present improved state of eology has created a consciousness of defect, rather an the triumph of acquisition; who, however partial to eir own creed, cannot persuade themselves that it is e ultimate attainment of the human mind, and that ıtant ages will repeat its articles as reverently as the ıtholics do the decrees of Trent; who contend earnest- for free inquiry, not because all who inquire will think they do, but because some at least may be expected outstrip them, and to be guides to higher truth. ith this nameless and spreading class, we have strong mpathies. We want new light, and care not whence comes; we want reformers worthy of the name; and should rejoice in such a manifestation of Christianity, would throw all present systems into obscurity.

We come now to a topic on which Milton will pro- bly startle a majority of readers. He is totally op- sed, as were most of the ancient philosophers, to the ctrine of God's creating the universe out of nothing. e maintains, that there can be no action without a

passive material on which the act is exerted, and that, accordingly, the world was framed out of a pre-existent matter. To the question, What and whence is this primary matter?—he answers, It is from God, "an efflux of the Deity." "It proceeded from God," and consequently no additional existence was produced by creation, nor is matter capable of annihilation. A specimen of his speculations on this subject, is given in the following quotation.

"It is clear then that the world was framed out of matter of some kind or other. For since action and passion are relative terms, and since, consequently, no agent can act externally, unless there be some patient, such as matter, it appears impossible that God could have created this world out of nothing; not from any defect of power on his part, but because it was necessary that something should have previously existed capable of receiving passively the exertion of the divine efficacy. Since, therefore, both Scripture and reason concur in pronouncing that all these things were made, not out of nothing, but out of matter, it necessarily follows, that matter must either have always existed independently of God, or have originated from God at some particular point of time. That matter should have been always independent of God (seeing that it is only a passive principle, dependent on the Deity, and subservient to him; and seeing, morever, that as in number, considered abstractly, so also in time or eternity, there is no inherent force or efficacy)—that matter, I say, should have existed of itself from all eternity, is inconceivable. If, on the contrary, it did not exist from all eternity, it is difficult to understand from whence it derives its origin. There remains, therefore, but one solution of the difficulty, for which moreover we have the authority of Scripture, namely, that all things are of God." *Vol. I. p.* 236, 237.

This doctrine naturally led Milton to another; viz. that there is no ground for the supposed distinction between body and soul; for, if matter is an "efflux of the Deity," it is plainly susceptible of intellectual functions. Accordingly our author affirms,—

"That man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body,—but the whole man is soul, and the soul man; that is to say, a body, or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational."

Vol. I. p. 250, 251.

We here learn that a passage in Paradise Lost, which we have admired as poetry, was deemed by Milton sound philosophy.

> "O Adam, One Almighty is, from whom
> All things proceed, and up to him return,
> If not depraved from good, created all
> Such to perfection, *one first matter all*,
> Indued with various forms, various degrees
> Of substance, and, in things that live, of life:
> But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,
> As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,
> Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
> *Till body up to spirit work*, in bounds
> Proportion'd to each kind. So, from the root
> Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
> More aery, last the bright consummate flower
> Spirits odorous breathes; flowers and their fruit,
> Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
> To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
> To *intellectual*." *Par. Lost, Book V. lines* 469–485.

These speculations of Milton will be received in this age, with more favour or with less aversion, than in his own; for, from the time of Locke, the discussions of philosophers have tended to unsettle our notions of matter, and no man is hardy enough now to say, what it is, or what it may not be. The idealism of Berkeley, though it has never organised a sect, has yet sensibly influenced the modes of thinking among metaphysicians; and the coincidence of this system with the theory of certain Hindoo philosophers, may lead us to suspect, that it contains some great latent truth, of which the European and Hindoo intellect, so generally at variance, have caught a glimpse. Matter is indeed a Proteus, which escapes us at the moment we hope to seize it. Priestley was anxious to make the soul material; but for this purpose, he was obliged to change matter from a substance into a power, that is, into no matter at all; so that he destroyed, in attempting to diffuse it. We have thrown out these remarks, to rescue Milton's memory from the imputation, which he was the last man to deserve, of irreverence towards God; for of this some will deem him guilty in tracing matter to the Deity as its fountain. Matter, which

seems to common people so intelligible, is still wrapped in mystery. We know it only by its relation to mind, or as an assemblage of powers to awaken certain sensations. Of its relation to God, we may be said to know nothing. Perhaps, as knowledge advances, we shall discover that the Creator is bound to his works, by stronger and more intimate ties than we now imagine. We do not then quarrel with such suggestions as Milton's, though we cannot but wonder at the earnestness with which he follows out such doubtful speculations.

Milton next proceeds to the consideration of man's state in Paradise, and as marriage was the only social relation then subsisting, he introduces here his views of that institution, and of polygamy and divorce. These views show, if not the soundness, yet the characteristic independence of his mind. No part of his book has given such offence as his doctrine of the lawfulness of polygamy, and yet nowhere is he less liable to reproach. It is plain that his error was founded on his reverence for Scripture. He saw that polygamy was allowed to the best men in the Old Testament, to patriarchs before the law, who, he says, were the objects of God's special favour, and to eminent individuals in subsequent ages; and finding no prohibition of it in the New Testament, he believed, that not only holy men would be traduced, but Scripture dishonoured, by pronouncing it morally evil. We are aware that some will say, that the practice *is* condemned in the New Testament; and we grant that it is censured by implication in these words of Christ, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery."* But we believe it to be an indisputable fact, that although Christianity was first preached in Asia, which had been from the earliest ages the seat of polygamy, the Apostles never denounced it as a crime, and never required their converts to put away all wives but one. "What then," some may say, "are you too the advocates of the lawfulness of polygamy?" We answer, No. We consider our religion as decidedly hostile to this practice; and we add, what

* Matt. xix. 9.

seems to us of great importance, that this hostility is not the less decided, because no express prohibition of polygamy is found in the New Testament; for Christianity is not a system of precise legislation, marking out with literal exactness everything to be done, and everything to be avoided; but an inculcation of broad principles, which it trusts to individuals and to society to be applied according to their best discretion. It is through this generous peculiarity, that Christianity is fitted to be a universal religion. Through this, it can subsist and blend itself with all stages of society, and can live in the midst of abuses, which it silently and powerfully overcomes, but against which it would avail little, were it immediately to lift up the voice of denunciation. We all know that long cherished corruptions, which have sent their roots through the whole frame of a community, cannot be torn up at once, without dissolving society. To Christianity is committed the sublime office of eradicating all the errors and evils of the world; but this it does by a process corresponding with man's nature, by working a gradual revolution in the mind, which, in its turn, works a safe and effectual revolution in manners and life. No argument, therefore, in favour of a practice, can be adduced from the fact, that it is not explicitly reprobated in the New Testament. For example, Christianity went forth into communities, where multitudes were held in slavery, and all ranks were ground and oppressed by despotism; abuses on which the spirit of our religion frowns as sternly as on any which can be named. Yet Christianity did not command the master to free his slaves, or the despot to descend from his absolute throne; but satisfied itself with proclaiming sublime truths in regard to God's paternal character and administration, and broad and generous principles of action, leaving to these the work of breaking every chain, by a gradual, inward, irresistible influence, and of asserting the essential equality and unalienable rights of the whole human race.—We cannot leave this topic, without adding, that not only Milton's error on polygamy, but many other noxious mistakes, have resulted from measuring Chris-

tianity by the condition of the primitive church, as if *that* were the standard of faith and practice, as if everything allowed then were wise and good, as if the religion were then unfolded in all its power and extent. The truth is, that Christianity was then in its infancy. The Apostles communicated its great truths to the rude minds of Jews and Heathens; but the primitive church did not, and could not, understand all that was involved in those principles, all the applications of which they are susceptible, all the influences they were to exert on the human mind, all the combinations they were to form with the new truths which time was to unfold, all the new lights in which they were to be placed, all the adaptations to human nature and to more advanced states of society, which they were progressively to manifest. In the first age, the religion was administered with a wise and merciful conformity to the capacities of its recipients. With the progress of intelligence, and the developement of the moral faculties, Christianity is freeing itself, and ought to be freed, from the local, temporary, and accidental associations of its childhood. Its great principles are coming forth more distinctly and brightly, and condemning abuses and errors, which have passed current for ages. This great truth, for such we deem it, that Christianity is a growing light, and that it must be more or less expounded by every age for itself, was not sufficiently apprehended by Milton; nor is it now understood as it will be. For want of apprehending it, Christianity is administered now, too much as it was in ages when nothing of our literature, philosophy, and spirit of improvement existed; and consequently it does not, we fear, exert that entire and supreme sway over strong and cultivated minds, which is its due, and which it must one day obtain.

Milton has connected with polygamy the subject of divorce, on which he is known to have differed from many Christians. He strenuously maintains in the work under review, and more largely in other treatises, that the violation of the marriage bed is not the sole ground of divorce, but that "the perpetual interruption

of peace and affection by mutual differences and unkindness, is a sufficient reason" for dissolving the conjugal relation. On this topic we cannot enlarge.

We now arrive at that part of Milton's work in which his powerful mind might have been expected to look beyond the prevalent opinions of his day, but in which he has followed the beaten road, almost without deviation, seldom noticing difficulties, and hardly seeming to know their existence. We refer to the great subjects of the moral condition of mankind, and of redemption by Jesus Christ. The doctrine of original sin he has assumed as true, and his faith in it was evidently strengthened by his doctrine of the identity of the soul with the body, in consequence of which he teaches, that souls are propagated from parents to children, and not immediately derived from God, and that they are born with an hereditary taint, just as the body contracts hereditary disease. It is humbling to add, that he supports this doctrine of the propagation of sin by physical contagion, on the ground that it relieves the Creator from the charge of originating the corruption, which we are said to bring into life; as if the infinitely pure and good God could, by a covert agency, infect with moral evil the passive and powerless mind of the infant, and then absolve himself of the horrible work by imputing it to instruments of his own ordination! Milton does not, however, believe in total depravity, feeling that this would free men from guilt, by taking away all power; and he therefore leaves us a portion of the divine image, not enough to give us a chance of virtue, but enough to take away excuse from sin. Such are the "tender mercies" of theology! With respect to Christ's mediation, he supposes, that Christ saves us by bearing our punishment, and in this way satisfying God's justice. His views indeed are not expressed with much precision, and seem to have been formed without much investigation. On these great subjects of human nature and redemption, we confess, we are disappointed in finding the spirit of Milton satisfying itself with the degrading notions which prevailed around him. But we remember, that it is the order of Provi-

dence, that the greatest minds should sympathise much with their age, and that they contribute the more to the progress of mankind, by not advancing too fast and too far beyond their cotemporaries. In this part of his work, Milton maintains, that the death threatened to sin extends equally to body and soul, which indeed he was bound to do, as he holds the soul and body to be one; and he then proceeds to defend with his usual power the necessary inference, that all consciousness is suspended between death and the resurrection. We have no faith in this doctrine, but we respect the courage with which he admits and maintains whatever can be fairly deduced from his opinions.

Having concluded the subject of redemption, he passes to what he calls "man's renovation, or the change whereby the sinner is brought into a state of grace;" and here, though he is not always perspicuous, yet he seldom deviates from what was then the beaten road. We owe it however to Milton, to say, that although he sometimes approached, he never adopted Calvinism. All the distinguishing articles of that creed, total depravity, election and reprobation, Christ dying for the elect only, irresistible grace, the preseverance of the saints, and justification by mere faith, all are denied and opposed by him, and some with great strength. Swayed as Milton was by the age in which he lived, his spirit could not be subdued to the heart-withering faith of the Genevan school.

We now come to a subject in which Milton was deeply interested; we mean Christian Liberty, under which head may be included the discipline of the church, the power of ministers, and the rights of the people. To vindicate the liberty of Christians, and to secure them from all outward impositions and ordinances, he maintains that the whole Mosaic law is abolished, so that no part is binding on Christians; a doctrine which may startle many, who believe that the moral precepts of that law are as binding now as ever. But such persons differ little in reality from Milton, whose true meaning is, that these precepts bind Christians, not through the authority of Moses, which is wholly done away, but only

because they are taken up and incorporated into Christianity, which is our only law, and which has set forth whatever was permanently valuable in Judaism, in a more perfect form, and with more powerful sanctions.

As another branch of the liberty of Christians, he maintains, as we may well suppose, the right of every believer to consult the Scriptures and to judge of them for himself. Not satisfied with this, he takes the ground of Quakerism, and maintains that the Christian, in addition to the Scriptures, has an inward guide, with which no human authority should interfere.

"Under the Gospel we possess, as it were, a twofold Scripture, one external, which is the written Word, and the other internal, which is the Holy Spirit, written in the hearts of believers, according to the promise of God, and with the intent that it should by no means be neglected." *Vol. II. p.* 172. "The external Scripture *** has been liable to frequent corruption, and in some instances has been corrupted, through the number, and occasionally the bad faith of those by whom it has been handed down, the variety and discrepancy of the original manuscripts, and the additional diversity produced by subsequent transcripts and printed editions. But the Spirit which leads to truth, cannot be corrupted, neither is it easy to deceive a man who is really spiritual." *P.* 173. It is difficult to conjecture the purpose of Providence in committing the writings of the New Testament to such uncertain and variable guardianship, unless it were to teach us by this very circumstance, that the Spirit which is given to us, is a more certain guide than Scripture, whom, therefore, it is our duty to follow." *P.* 174. "Hence it follows, that when an acquiescence in human opinions or an obedience to human authority in matters of religion is exacted, in the name either of the church or of the Christian magistrate, from those who are themselves led individually by the spirit of God, this is in effect to impose a yoke, not on man, but on the Holy Spirit itself." *P.* 176.

This, in words, is genuine Quakerism; but whether Milton understood by the Holy Spirit that *immediate* revelation, which forms the leading doctrine of that creed, we doubt. To this doctrine it may be objected, and we think Milton must have felt the objection, that it disparages and discourages our faculties, and produces inaction of mind, leading men to expect from a sudden flash from Heaven, the truth which we are taught to seek by the right use of our own powers. We imagine

that Milton believed that the Holy Spirit works with and by our own understandings, and, instead of superseding reason, invigorates and extends it. But this is not the only place where his precise views are obscured by general expressions, or by rapid and superficial notices of subjects.

In Milton's views of the church and the ministry, we have other proofs of his construing the Scriptures in the manner most favourable to Christian liberty. He teaches that the universal church has no head but Christ, and that the power arrogated by popes, councils, and bishops, is gross usurpation. In regard to particular churches, he is a strict Congregationalist. Each church, he says, is competent to its own government, and connected with others only by the bond of charity. No others are authorised to interfere with any of its concerns, but in the way of brotherly counsel.

"Every church consisting of the above parts," i. e. well instructed believers, "however small its numbers, is to be considered as in itself an integral and perfect church, so far as regards its religious rights; nor has it any superior on earth, whether individual, or assembly, or convention, to whom it can be lawfully required to render submission; inasmuch as no believer out of its pale, nor any order or council of men whatever, has a greater right than itself, to expect a participation in the written word and the promises, in the presence of Christ, in the presiding influence of the Spirit, and in those gracious gifts which are the reward of united prayer."

Vol. II. p. 194.

The choice of the minister, he says, belongs to the people. The minister, if possible, should serve the church gratuitously, and live by the labour of his own hands. This unpaid service he pronounces more noble and consonant to our Lord's example and that of the Apostles. In accordance with these views, he favours the idea of a church consisting of few members.

"All that pertains to the worship of God and the salvation of believers, all, in short, that is necessary to constitute a church, may be duly and orderly transacted in a particular church, within the walls of a private house, and where the numbers assembled are inconsiderable. Nay, such a church, when, in compliance with the interested views of its pastor, it allows of an increase of numbers beyond what is convenient,

deprives itself in a great measure of the advantages to be derived from meeting in common." *Vol. II. p.* 194.

He maintains that ministers are not to monopolise public instruction, or the administration of the ordinances; but that all Christians, having sufficient gifts, are to participate in these services.

"The custom of holding assemblies is to be maintained, not after the present mode, but according to the apostolical institution, which did not ordain that an individual, and he a stipendiary, should have the sole right of speaking from a higher place, but that each believer in turn should be authorised to speak, or prophesy, or teach, or exhort, according to his gifts; insomuch that even the weakest among the brethren had the privilege of asking questions, and consulting the elders and more experienced members of the congregation." *Vol. II. p.* 203. "Any believer is competent to act as an *ordinary minister*, according as convenience may require, provided only he be endowed with the necessary gifts; these gifts constituting his mission." *P.* 153. "If therefore it be competent to any believer whatever to preach the gospel, provided he be furnished with the requisite gifts, it is also competent to him to administer the rite of baptism; inasmuch as the latter office is inferior to the former." *P.* 157. "With regard to the Lord's supper also, it has been shown, in the preceding chapter, that all are entitled to participate in that rite, but that the privilege of dispensing the elements is confined to no particular man, or order of men." *P.* 158.

We entirely accord with the spirit of freedom which these passages breathe; but from some of the particular views we dissent. The great error of Milton lies in supposing that the primitive church was meant to be a model for all ages. But can we suppose that the church at its birth, when it was poor, persecuted, hemmed in by Judaism and Heathenism, supplied imperfectly with written rules and records, dependent for instruction chiefly on inspired teachers, and composed of converts who had grown up and been steeped in Jewish and Heathen errors—can we imagine, that in these circumstances the church took a form which it ought to retain as sacred and analterable, in its triumphs, and prosperity, and diffusion, and in ages of greater light and refinement? We know that in the first ages, there were no ministers with salaries, or edifices for public worship. Christians met in private

houses, and sometimes in the obscurest they could find. On these occasions, the services were not monopolised by an individual, but shared by the fraternity; nor is there a hint in the New Testament that the administration of the Lord's supper and baptism was confined to the minister. But in all this we have no rule for the present day. Indeed it seems to us utterly repugnant to the idea of a universal religion, intended for all ages and nations, and for all the progressive states of society to the end of the world, to suppose that in its infancy it established an order of worship, instruction, and discipline, which was to remain inviolable in all future times. This doctrine of an inflexible form, seems to us servile, superstitious, and disparaging to Christianity. Our religion is too spiritual and inward, and cares too little about its exterior, to bind itself in this everlasting chain. The acknowledged indefiniteness of the New Testament in regard to this subject, is no mean proof of the enlarged and prospective wisdom of its founder. We believe, that, with the diffusion of liberal views, the question will arise, whether our religion cannot be taught and administered in methods and forms more adapted than those which now prevail, to its spirit and great design, to the principles of human nature, and to the condition and wants of society. Among the changes which may grow from this discussion, we do not anticipate the adoption of Milton's plan of sentencing ministers to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; for we think that we see reasons, in the general spread of knowledge, for enlarging their means and opportunities of study and intellectual culture, that they may meet the increasing demand for more enlightened inculcation of Christian truth. At the same time, it seems to us not unlikely, that, in conformity to Milton's suggestion, public instruction, instead of continuing to be a monopoly of ministers, may be extended freely to men of superior intelligence and piety, and that the results of this arrangement may be, the infusion of new life, power, and practical wisdom into religious teaching, and the substitution of a more natural, free, and various eloquence, for the technical and monotonous mode of

treating subjects, which clings so often and so obstinately to the performances of the pulpit. Again, we do not expect, among the changes of forms and outward worship, that Christians, to meet our author's views, will shut their churches and meet in private houses; for large religious edifices, and large congregations, seem to us among the important means of collecting and interesting in Christianity, the mass of the community. But perhaps narrower associations for religious improvement may be formed, in which the formalities of public worship will be relaxed, and Christians may reap the benefits of the more familiar and confidential meetings of the primitive converts. It is indeed a great question, how the public administration of Christianity, including modes of discipline, instruction, and worship, may be rendered more impressive and effectual. This field is almost untrodden; but if we read aright the signs of the times, the day for exploring it draws nigh.

We have said, that whilst we dissent from some of Milton's views on the subject of our present remarks, we agree in their spirit. It was evidently the aim of all his suggestions, to strip the clergy, as they are called, of that peculiar, artificial sanctity, with which superstition had long arrayed them, and which had made their simple, benignant office, one of the worst instruments of ambition and despotism. We believe that this institution will never exert its true and full power on the church and on the world, until the childish awe with which it has been viewed, shall be exchanged for enlightened esteem, and until men, instead of expecting from it certain mysterious, undefined influences, shall see in it a rational provision for promoting virtue and happiness, not by magic, but according to the fixed laws of human nature.

The remainder of the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," furnishes topics on which we should willingly remark; but we have only time to glance at the opinions in which Milton differs from the majority. He rejects infant baptism, and argues against it with his usual earnestness and strength. He not only affirms, with many other Christians, that the Fourth Commandment,

relating to the Sabbath, is abolished with the rest of the Mosaic system, but maintains, what few have done, that under the Gospel no time is appointed for public worship, but that the observance of the first day of the week rests wholly on expediency, and on the agreement of Christians. He believes, that Christ is to appear visibly for the judgment of the world, and that he will reign a thousand years on earth; at the end of which period, Satan will assail the church with an innumerable confederacy, and be overwhelmed with everlasting ruin. He speaks of the judgment as beginning with Christ's second advent, and as comprehending his whole government through the millennium, as well as the closing scene, when sentence will be pronounced on evil angels, and on the whole human race. We have now given, we believe, all the peculiarities of Milton's faith. As for that large part of his work in which he has accumulated scriptural proofs of doctrines and duties in which all Christians are agreed, its general tenor may be understood without further remarks.

It may now be asked, what is the value of this book? We prize it chiefly as a testimony to Milton's profound reverence for the Christian religion, and an assertion of the freedom and rights of the mind. We are obliged to say, that the work throws little new light on the great subjects of which it treats. Some will say, that this ought not to surprise us; for new light is not to be looked for in the department of theology. But if this be true, our religion may be charged with the want of adaptation to our nature in an essential point; for one of the most striking features of the human mind is, its thirst for constantly enlarging knowledge, and its proneness to lose its interest in subjects which it has exhausted. The chief cause of Milton's failure, was, that he sought truth too exclusively in the past, and among the dead. He indeed called no man master, and disclaimed the authority of Fathers, and was evidently dissatisfied with all the sects which had preceded or were spread around him. Still he believed in the perfection of the primitive church, and that Christianity, instead of being carried forward, was to be

carried *back* to its original purity. To use his own striking language, "the lovely form of Truth," which Christians at first embraced, "had been hewn into a thousand pieces, like the mangled body of Osiris, and scattered to the four winds;" and, consequently, he believed that the great duty of her friends, was, "to gather up limb by limb, and bring together every joint and member." In conformity with this doctrine, he acted too much as an eclectic theologian, culling something from almost every sect, and endeavouring to form an harmonious system from materials "gathered from the four winds." He would have done better, had he sought truth less in other minds, and more in the communion of his own soul with Scripture, nature, God, and itself. The fact is, that the church, from its beginning, has been imperfect in knowledge and practice, and our business is, not to rest in the past, but to use it as a means of a purer and brighter futurity. Christianity began to be corrupted at its birth, to be debased by earthly mixtures, as soon as it touched the earth. The seeds of that corruption which grew and shot up into the overshadowing despotism of papal Rome, were sown in the age of the Apostles, as we learn in the Epistles; and we infer from the condition of the world, that nothing but a stupendous moral miracle, subverting all the laws of the human mind, could have prevented their developement. Who, that understands human nature, does not know, that old associations are not broken up in a moment; that to minds, plunged in a midnight of error, truth must gradually open like the dawning day; that old views will mingle with the new; that old ideas, which we wish to banish, will adhere to the old words to which they were formerly attached; and that the sudden and entire eradication of long-rooted errors, would be equivalent to the creation of a new intellect? How long did the Apostles, under Christ's immediate tuition, withstand his instructions! Even Peter, after the miraculous illumination of the day of Pentecost, remained ignorant, until the message from Cornelius, of that glorious feature of Christianity, the abolition of the Jewish peculiarity, and the equal participation

of the Gentiles with the Jews in the blessings of the Messiah. As soon as Christianity was preached, it was blended with Judaism, which had power to neutralise the authority of Paul in many churches. In like manner, it soon began to be "spoiled" of its simplicity, "by philosophy and science falsely so called," and to be encumbered by pagan ceremonies. The first Christians were indeed brought into "wonderful light," if their Christian state be compared with the darkness from which they had emerged; but not if compared with the perfection of knowledge to which Christ came to exalt the human race. The earliest Fathers, as we learn from their works, were not receptive of large communications of truth. Their writings abound in puerilities and marks of childish credulity, and betray that indistinctness of vision, which is experienced by men who issue from thick darkness into the light of day. In the ages of barbarism which followed the fall of the Roman empire, Christianity, though it answered wise purposes of Providence, was more and more disfigured and obscured. The Reformation was indeed a glorious era, but glorious for its reduction of papal and clerical power, and for the partial liberation of the mind, rather than for immediate improvements of men's apprehensions of Christianity. Some of the Reformers invented or brought back as injurious errors as those they overthrew. Luther's consubstantiation differed from the Pope's transubstantiation by a syllable, and that was all the gain; and we may safely say, that transubstantiation was a less monstrous doctrine than the five points of Calvin. How vain, therefore, was Milton's search for "the mangled Osiris," for "the lovely form and immortal features of Truth," in the history of the church!

Let us not be misunderstood, as if we would cut off the present age from the past. We mean not, that Milton should have neglected the labours of his predecessors. He believed justly, that all the periods and generations of the human family, are bound together by a sublime connexion, and that the wisdom of each age is chiefly a derivation from all preceding ages, not

excepting the most ancient, just as a noble stream, through its whole extent and in its widest overflowings, still holds communication with its infant springs, gushing out perhaps in the depths of distant forests, or on the heights of solitary mountains. We only mean to say, that the stream of religious knowledge is to swell and grow through its whole course, and to receive new contributions from gifted minds in successive generations. We only regret that Milton did not draw more from the deep and full fountains of his own soul. We wish only to teach, that antiquity was the infancy of our race, and that its acquisitions, instead of being rested in, are to bear us onward to new heights of truth and virtue. We mean not to complain of Milton for not doing more. He rendered to mankind a far greater service than that of a teacher of an improved theology. He taught and exemplified that spirit of intellectual freedom, through which all the great conquests of truth are to be achieved, and by which the human mind is to attain to a new consciousness of its sublime faculties, and to invigorate and expand itself for ever.

We here close out remarks on Milton. In offering this tribute, we have aimed at something higher than to express and gratify our admiration of an eminent man. We believe that an enlightened and exalted mind is a brighter manifestation of God than the outward universe; and we have set forth, as we have been able, the praises of an illustrious servant of the Most High, that through him, glory may redound to the Father of all spirits, the Fountain of all wisdom and magnanimous virtue. And still more; we believe that the sublime intelligence of Milton was imparted, not for his own sake only, but to awaken kindred virtue and greatness in other souls. Far from regarding him as standing alone and unapproachable, we believe that he is an illustration of what all who are true to their nature, will become in the progress of their being; and we have held him forth, not to excite an ineffectual admiration, but to stir up our own and others' breasts to an exhilarating pursuit of high and ever-growing attainments in intellect and virtue.

EMARKS ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

ıE Life of Napoleon Bonaparte by Sir Walter ;, has been anticipated with an eagerness propor- d to the unrivalled powers of the author, and to wonderful endowments and fortunes of the hero. : the general expectation has been satisfied, we ot affirm. But few will deny, that the writer has ı us a monument of his great talents. The rapidity which such a work has been thrown off astonishes We think, however, that the author owed to him- and to the public, a more deliberate execution of important undertaking. He should either have doned it, or have bestowed on it the long and ınt labour which it required. The marks of neg- ıce and haste, which are spread through the work, serious blemishes, and to more fastidious readers piable defects. It wants compression and selection ıghout. Many passages are encumbered with ver- e. Many thoughts are weakened by useless expan- and worse than useless repetition. Comparisons ıccumulated to excess, and whilst many are exqui- perhaps as many are trite and unworthy of history. remarks are generally just, but obvious. We : these defects plainly, that we may express the ɜ freely our admiration of the talents, which have ıuted so rapidly, a work so extensive and various, ich in information, so fresh and vivid in descrip- , and furnishing such abundant specimens of a free, eful, and vigorous style.

The work has the great merit of impartiality. It is probably inaccurate in many of its details, but singularly free from prejudice and passion. Not a few, who considered that the author was both a Briton and a friend of the principles and policy of Pitt, were expecting from his pen a discoloured delineation of the implacable foe of England and of that great minister. But the rectitude of his mind, and his reverence for historical truth, have effectually preserved him from abusing the great power conferred on him by his talents over public opinion. We think that his laudable fear of wronging the enemy of his country, joined to an admiration of the dazzling qualities of Napoleon, has led him to soften unduly the crimes of his hero, and to give more favourable impressions than truth will warrant.

But enough of the author, who needs not our praise, and can suffer little by our censure. Our concern is with his subject. A just estimate of the late emperor of France seems to us important. That extraordinary man, having operated on the world with unprecedented power during his life, is now influencing it by his character. That character, we apprehend, is not viewed as it should be. The kind of admiration which it inspires, even in free countries, is a bad omen. The greatest crime against society, that of spoiling it of its rights and loading it with chains, still fails to move that deep abhorrence which is its due, and which, if really felt, would fix on the usurper a brand of indelible infamy. Regarding freedom as the chief interest of human nature, as essential to its intellectual, moral, and religious progress, we look on men, who have signalised themselves by their hostility to it, with an indignation at once stern and sorrowful, which no glare of successful war, and no admiration of the crowd, can induce us to suppress. We mean then to speak freely of Napoleon. But if we know ourselves, we could on no account utter one unjust reproach. We speak the more freely, because conscious of exemption from every feeling like animosity. We war not with the dead. We would resist only what we deem the pernicious influence of the dead. We would devote ourselves to

the cause of freedom and humanity, a cause perpetually betrayed by the admiration lavished on prosperous crime and all-grasping ambition. Our great topic will be the Character of Napoleon; and with this we shall naturally intersperse reflections on the great interests which he perpetually influenced.

We begin with observing, that it is an act of justice to Bonaparte, to remember, that he grew up under disastrous influences, in a troubled day, when men's minds were convulsed, old institutions overthrown, old opinions shaken, old restraints snapped asunder; when the authority of religion was spurned, and youth abandoned to unwonted license; when the imagination was made feverish by visions of indistinct good, and the passions swelled by the sympathy of millions to a resistless torrent. A more dangerous school for the character cannot well be conceived. That all-seeing Being, who knows the trials of his creatures and the secrets of the heart, can alone judge to what degree crimes are extenuated by circumstances so inauspicious. This we must remember, in reviewing the history of men who were exposed to trials unknown to ourselves. But because the turpitude of an evil agent is diminished by infelicities of education or condition, we must not therefore confound the immutable distinctions of right and wrong, and withhold our reprobation from atrocities which have spread misery and slavery far and wide.

It is also due to Napoleon to observe, that there has always existed, and still exists, a mournful obtuseness of moral feeling in regard to the crimes of military and political life. The wrong-doing of public men on a large scale, has never drawn upon them that sincere, hearty abhorrence which visits private vice. Nations have seemed to court aggression and bondage, by their stupid, insane admiration of successful tyrants. The wrongs, from which men have suffered most, in body and mind, are yet unpunished. True; Christianity has put into our lips censures on the aspiring and the usurping. But these reproaches are as yet little more than sounds, and unmeaning commonplaces. They are repeated for form's sake. When we read or hear them,

we feel that they want depth and strength. They are not inward, solemn, burning convictions, breaking from the indignant soul with a tone of reality, before which guilt would cower. The true moral feeling in regard to the crimes of public men is almost to be created. We believe, then, that such a character as Bonaparte's, is formed with very little consciousness of its turpitude; and society, which contributes so much to its growth, is responsible for its existence, and merits in part the misery which it spreads.

Of the early influences under which Bonaparte was formed, we know little. He was educated in a military school, and this, we apprehend, is not an institution to form much delicacy, or independence of moral feeling; for the young soldier is taught, as his first duty, to obey his superior without consulting his conscience; to take human life at another's bidding; to perform that deed, which above all others requires deliberate conviction, without a moment's inquiry as to its justice; and to place himself a passive instrument in hands, which, as all history teaches, often reek with blood causelessly shed.

His first political association was with the Jacobins, the most sanguinary of all the factions which raged in France, and whose sway is emphatically called "the reign of terror." The service which secured his command in Italy, was the turning of his artillery on the people, who, however dangerous when acting as a mob, happened in the present case to understand their rights, and were directing their violence against manifest usurpation.

His first campaign was in Italy, and we have still a vivid recollection of the almost rapturous admiration, with which we followed his first triumphs; for then we were simple enough to regard him as the chosen guardian of liberty. His peculiar tactics were not then understood; the secret of his success had not reached us; and his rapid victories stimulated the imagination to invest him with the mysterious powers of a hero of romance. We confess that we cannot now read the history of his Italian wars without a quickened move-

ment in the veins. The rapidity of his conceptions; the inexhaustibleness of his invention; the energy of his will; the decision which suffered not a moment's pause between the purpose and its execution; the presence of mind, which, amidst sudden reverses and on the brink of ruin, devised the means of safety and success; these commanding attributes, added to a courage which, however suspected afterwards, never faltered then, compel us to bestow, what indeed we have no desire to withhold, the admiration which is due to superior power.

Let not the friends of peace be offended. We have said, and we repeat it, that we have no desire to withhold our admiration from the energies which war often awakens. Great powers, even in their perversion, attest a glorious nature, and we may feel their grandeur, whilst we condemn, with our whole strength of moral feeling, the evil passions by which they are depraved. We are willing to grant, that war, abhor it as we may, often developes and places in strong light, a force of intellect and purpose, which raises our conceptions of the human soul. There is perhaps no moment in life, in which the mind is brought into such intense action, in which the will is so strenuous, and in which irrepressible excitement is so tempered with self-possession, as in the hour of battle. Still the greatness of the warrior is poor and low compared with the magnanimity of virtue. It vanishes before the greatness of principle. The martyr to humanity, to freedom, or religion; the unshrinking adherent of despised and deserted truth, who, alone, unsupported, and scorned, with no crowd to infuse into him courage, no variety of objects to draw his thoughts from himself, no opportunity of effort or resistance to rouse and nourish energy, still yields himself calmly, resolutely, with invincible philanthropy, to bear prolonged and exquisite suffering, which one retracting word might remove—such a man is as superior to the warrior, as the tranquil and boundless heavens above us, to the low earth we tread beneath our feet.

We have spoken of the energies of mind called forth by war. If we may be allowed a short digression,

which however bears directly on our main subject—the merits of Napoleon—we would observe, that military talent, even of the highest order, is far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius; for it is not conversant with the highest and richest objects of thought. We grant that a mind, which takes in a wide country at a glance, and understands, almost by intuition, the positions it affords for a successful campaign, is a comprehensive and vigorous one. The general who disposes his forces so as to counteract a greater force; who supplies by skill, science, and invention, the want of numbers; who dives into the counsels of his enemy, and who gives unity, energy, and success to a vast variety of operations, in the midst of casualties and obstructions which no wisdom could foresee, manifests great power. But still the chief work of a general is to apply physical force; to remove physical obstructions; to avail himself of physical aids and advantages; to act on matter; to overcome rivers, ramparts, mountains, and human muscles; and these are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest order; and accordingly, nothing is more common than to find men eminent in this department, who are wanting in the noblest energies of the soul, in habits of profound and liberal thinking, in imagination and taste, in the capacity of enjoying works of genius, and in large and original views of human nature and society. The office of a great general does not differ widely from that of a great mechanician, whose business it is to frame new combinations of physical forces, to adapt them to new circumstances, and to remove new obstructions. Accordingly, great generals, away from the camp, are often no greater men than the mechanician taken from his workshop. In conversation they are often dull. Deep and refined reasonings they cannot comprehend. We know that there are splendid exceptions. Such was Cesar, at once the greatest soldier and the most sagacious statesman of his age, whilst, in eloquence and literature, he left behind him almost all who had devoted themselves exclusively

to these pursuits. But such cases are rare. The conqueror of Napoleon, the hero of Waterloo, possesses undoubtedly great military talents; but we do not understand, that his most partial admirers claim for him a place in the highest class of minds. We will not go down for illustration to such men as Nelson, a man great on the deck, but debased by gross vices, and who never pretended to enlargement of intellect. To institute a comparison in point of talent and genius between such men and Milton, Bacon, and Shakspeare, is almost an insult on these illustrious names. Who can think of these truly great intelligences; of the range of their minds through heaven and earth; of their deep intuition into the soul; of their new and glowing combinations of thought; of the energy with which they grasped and subjected to their main purpose, the infinite materials of illustration which nature and life afford—who can think of the forms of transcendent beauty and grandeur which they created, or which were rather emanations of their own minds; of the calm wisdom and fervid imagination which they conjoined; of the voice of power, in which, "though dead, they still speak," and awaken intellect, sensibility, and genius in both hemispheres—who can think of such men, and not feel the immense inferiority of the most gifted warrior, whose elements of thought are physical forces and physical obstructions, and whose employment is the combination of the lowest class of objects on which a powerful mind can be employed.

We return to Napoleon. His splendid victories in Italy spread his name like lightning through the civilised world. Unhappily, they emboldened him to those unprincipled and open aggressions, to the indulgence of that lawless, imperious spirit, which marked his future course, and kept pace with his growing power. In his victorious career, he soon came in contact with states, some of which, as Tuscany and Venice, had acknowledged the French Republic, whilst others, as Parma and Modena, had observed a strict neutrality. The old-fashioned laws of nations, under which such states would have found shelter, seemed never to have

crossed the mind of the young victor. Not satisfied with violating the neutrality of all, he seized the port of Leghorn, and ruined the once flourishing commerce of Tuscany; and having exacted heavy tribute from Parma and Modena, he compelled these powers to surrender, what had hitherto been held sacred in the utmost extremities of war, some of their choicest pictures, the chief ornaments of their capitals. We are sometimes told of the good done by Napoleon to Italy. But we have heard his name pronounced as indignantly there as here. An Italian cannot forgive him for robbing that country of its noblest works of art, its dearest treasures and glories, which had made it a land of pilgrimage to men of taste and genius from the whole civilised world, and which had upheld and solaced its pride under conquest and humiliation. From this use of power in the very dawn of his fortunes, it might easily have been foretold, what part he would act in the stormy day which was approaching, when the sceptre of France and Europe was to be offered to any strong hand, which should be daring enough to grasp it.

Next to Italy, Egypt became the stage for the display of Napoleon; Egypt, a province of the Grand Signior, with whom France was in profound peace, and who, according to the long established relations of Europe, was her natural ally. It would seem, that this expedition was Bonaparte's own project. His motives are not very distinctly stated by his biographer. We doubt not that his great aim was conspicuousness. He chose a theatre where all eyes could be turned upon him. He saw that the time for usurpation had not yet come in France. To use his own language, "the fruit was not yet ripe." He wanted a field of action which would draw upon him the gaze of the world, and from which he might return at the favourable moment for the prosecution of his enterprises at home. At the same time he undoubtedly admitted into his mind, which success had already intoxicated, some vague wild hope of making an impression on the Eastern world, which might place its destinies at his command, and give him a throne more enviable than Europe could bestow.

His course in the East exhibited the same lawlessness, the same contempt of all restraints on his power, which we have already noted. No means, which promised success, were thought the worse for their guilt. It was not enough for him to boast of his triumphs over the cross, or to profess Mahometanism. He claimed inspiration, and a commission from God, and was anxious to join the character of prophet to that of hero. This was the beginning of the great weaknesses and errors into which he was betrayed by that spirit of self-exaggeration, which, under the influence of past success and of unbounded flattery, was already growing into a kind of insanity. In his own view he was fit to be a compeer with Mahomet. His greatness in his own eyes made him blind to the folly of urging his supernatural claims on the Turk, who contemned, even more than he abhorred, a Frank; and who would sooner have sold himself a slave to Christians, than have acknowledged a renegade Christian as a sharer of the glories of Mahomet. It was not enough for Bonaparte, on this expedition, to insult God, to show an impiety as foolish as it was daring. He proceeded to trample on the sentiments and dictates of humanity with equal hardihood. The massacre of Jaffa is universally known. Twelve hundred prisoners, and probably more, who had surrendered themselves to Napoleon, and were apparently admitted to quarter, were two days afterwards marched out of the fort, divided into small bodies, and then deliberately shot, and, in case the musket was not effectual, were despatched by bayonets. This was an outrage, which cannot be sheltered by the laws and usages of war, barbarous as they are. It was the deed of a bandit and savage, and ought to be execrated by good men, who value and would preserve the mitigations which Christianity has infused into the conduct of national hostilities.

The next great event in Bonaparte's history, was the usurpation of the supreme power of the state, and the establishment of military despotism over France. On the particulars of this criminal act, we have no desire to enlarge, nor are we anxious to ascertain, whether our

hero, on this occasion, lost his courage and self-possession, as he is reported to have done. We are more anxious to express our convictions of the turpitude of this outrage on liberty and justice. For this crime but one apology can be offered. Napoleon, it is said, seized the reins, when, had he let them slip, they would have fallen into other hands. He enslaved France at a moment, when, had he spared her, she would have found another tyrant. Admitting the truth of the plea, what is it but the reasoning of the highwayman, who robs and murders the traveller, because the booty was about to be seized by another hand, or because another dagger was ready to do the bloody deed? We are aware that the indignation, with which we regard this crime of Napoleon, will find a response in few breasts; for to the multitude a throne is a temptation which no virtue can be expected to withstand. But moral truth is immoveable amidst the sophistry, ridicule, and abject reasonings of men, and the time will come, when it will find a meet voice to give it utterance. Of all crimes against society, usurpation is the blackest. He who lifts a parricidal hand against his country's rights and freedom; who plants his foot on the necks of thirty millions of his fellow-creatures; who concentrates in his single hand the powers of a mighty empire; and who wields its powers, squanders its treasures, and pours forth its blood like water, to make other nations slaves and the world his prey—this man, as he unites all crimes in his sanguinary career, so he should be set apart by the human race for their unmingled and unmeasured abhorrence, and should bear on his guilty head a mark as opprobrious as that which the first murderer wore. We cannot think with patience of one man fastening chains on a whole people, and subjecting millions to his single will; of whole regions overshadowed by the tyranny of a frail being like ourselves. In anguish of spirit we exclaim, How long will an abject world kiss the foot which tramples it? How long shall crime find shelter in its very aggravations and excess?

Perhaps it may be said, that our indignation seems

to light on Napoleon, not so much because he was a despot, as because he became a despot by usurpation; that we seem not to hate tyranny itself, so much as a particular mode of gaining it. We do indeed regard usurpation as a crime of peculiar blackness, especially when committed, as in the case of Napoleon, in the name of liberty. All despotism, however, whether usurped or hereditary, is our abhorrence. We regard it as the most grievous wrong and insult to the human race. But towards the hereditary despot we have more of compassion than indignation. Nursed and brought up in delusion, worshipped from his cradle, never spoken to in the tone of fearless truth, taught to look on the great mass of his fellow-beings as an inferior race, and to regard despotism as a law of nature and a necessary element of social life; such a prince, whose education and condition almost deny him the possibility of acquiring healthy moral feeling and manly virtue, must not be judged severely. Still, in absolving the despot from much of the guilt which seems at first to attach to his unlawful and abused power, we do not the less account despotism a wrong and a curse. The time for its fall, we trust, is coming. It cannot fall too soon. It has long enough wrung from the labourer his hard earnings; long enough squandered a nation's wealth on its parasites and minions; long enough warred against the freedom of the mind, and arrested the progress of truth. It has filled dungeons enough with the brave and good, and shed enough of the blood of patriots. Let its end come. It cannot come too soon.

We have now followed Bonaparte to the moment of possessing himself of the supreme power. Those who were associated with him in subverting the government of the Directory, essayed to lay restraints on the First Consul, who was to take their place. But he indignantly repelled them. He held the sword, and with this, not only intimidated the selfish, but awed and silenced the patriotic, who saw too plainly, that it could only be wrested from him by renewing the horrors of the revolution.

We now proceed to consider some of the means l which he consolidated his power, and raised it into tl imperial dignity. We consider these as much mo important illustrations of his character than his succe sive campaigns, to which accordingly we shall give littl attention.

One of his first measures for giving stability to hi power, was certainly a wise one, and was obviousl dictated by his situation and character. Having seize the first dignity in the state by military force, and lear ing on a devoted soldiery, he was under no necessity c binding himself to any of the parties which had distracte the country, a vassalage to which his domineering spiri could ill have stooped. Policy and his love of master pointed out to him an indiscriminate employment of th leading men of all parties; and not a few of these ha become so selfish and desperate in the disastrous pr gress of the revolution, that they were ready to brea up old connexions, and to divide the spoils of the Re public with a master. Accordingly, he adopted a sy tem of comprehension and lenity, from which even th emigrants were not excluded, and had the satisfactio of seeing almost the whole talent which the revolutio had quickened, leagued in the execution of his plan Under the able men whom he called to his aid, th finances and the war department, which had fallen int a confusion that threatened ruin to the state, were soo restored to order, and means and forces provided f retrieving the recent defeats and disgraces of the Frenc armies.

This leads us to mention another and most importa and effectual means by which Napoleon secured an enlarged his power. We refer to the brilliant campaig immediately following his elevation to the Consulat and which restored to France the ascendency whic she had lost during his absence. On his success at th juncture his future fortunes wholly depended. It wa in this campaign that he proved himself the worth rival of Hannibal. The energy which conducted a army with its cavalry, artillery, and supplies, across th Alps, by untried paths, which only the chamois hunte

born and bred amidst glaciers and everlasting snows, had trodden, gave the impression, which of all others he most desired to spread, of his superiority to nature, as well as to human opposition. This enterprise was in one view a fearful omen to Europe. It showed a power over the minds of his soldiers, the effects of which were not to be calculated. The conquest of St. Bernard by a French army was the boast of the nation; but a still more wonderful thing was, the capacity of the general to inspire into that army the intense force, confidence, resolution, and patience, by which alone the work could be accomplished. The victory of Marengo, gained by one of the accidents of war in the moment of apparent defeat and ruin, secured to Bonaparte the dominion which he coveted. France, who, in her madness and folly, had placed her happiness in conquest, now felt that the glory of her arms was safe only in the hands of the First Consul; whilst the soldiery, who held the sceptre in their gift, became more thoroughly satisfied, that triumph and spoils waited on his standard.

Another important and essential means of securing and building up his power, was the system of *espionage*, called the Police, which, under the Directory, had received a developement worthy of those friends of freedom, but which was destined to be perfected by the wisdom of Napoleon. It would seem as if despotism, profiting by the experience of ages, had put forth her whole skill and resources in forming the French police, and had framed an engine, never to be surpassed, for stifling the faintest breathings of disaffection, and chaining every free thought. This system of *espionage* (we are proud that we have no English word for the infernal machine) had indeed been used under all tyrannies. But it wanted the craft of Fouché, and the energy of Bonaparte, to disclose all its powers. In the language of our author, "it spread through all the ramifications of society;" that is, every man of the least importance in the community, had the eye of a spy upon him. He was watched at home as well as abroad, in the *boudoir* and theatre, in the brothel and gaming-house; and these last-named haunts furnished not a few ministers

of the Argus-eyed Police. There was an ear open through all France to catch the whispers of discontent; a power of evil, which aimed to rival, in omnipresence and invisibleness, the benignant agency of the Deity. Of all instruments of tyranny, this is the most detestable. It chills social intercourse; locks up the heart; infects and darkens men's minds with mutual jealousies and fears; and reduces to system a wary dissimulation, subversive of force and manliness of character. We find, however, some consolation in learning that tyrants are the prey of distrust, as well as the people over whom they set this cruel guard; that tyrants cannot confide in their own spies, but must keep watch over the machinery which we have described, lest it recoil upon themselves. Bonaparte at the head of an army is a dazzling spectacle; but Bonaparte, heading a horde of spies, compelled to doubt and fear these base instruments of his power, compelled to divide them into bands, and to receive daily reports from each, so that by balancing them against each other and sifting their testimony, he might gather the truth; Bonaparte, thus employed, is anything but imposing. It requires no great elevation of thought to look down on such an occupation with scorn; and we see, in the anxiety and degradation which it involves, the beginning of that retribution which tyranny cannot escape.

Another means by which the First Consul protected his power, can excite no wonder. That he should fetter the press, should banish or imprison refractory editors, should subject the journals and more important works of literature to jealous superintendence, these were things of course. Free writing and despotism are such implacable foes, that we hardly think of blaming a tyrant for keeping no terms with the press. He cannot do it. He might as reasonably choose a volcano for the foundation of his throne. Necessity is laid upon him, unless he is in love with ruin, to check the bold and honest expression of thought. But the necessity is his own choice; and let infamy be that man's portion, who seizes a power which he cannot sustain but by dooming the mind, through a vast empire, to

slavery, and by turning the press, that great organ of truth, into an instrument of public delusion and debasement.

We pass to another means of removing obstructions to his power and ambition, still worse than the last. We refer to the terror which he spread by his severities, just before assuming the imperial power. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien was justified by Napoleon as a method of striking fear into the Bourbons, who, as he said, were plotting his death. This may have been one motive; for we have reason to think that he was about that time threatened with assassination. But we believe still more, that he intended to awe into acquiescence the opposition which he knew would be awakened in many breasts, by the prostration of the forms of the republic, and the open assumption of the imperial dignity. There were times when Bonaparte disclaimed the origination of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien. But no other could have originated it. It bears internal marks of its author. The boldness, decision, and overpowering rapidity of the crime, point unerringly to the soul where it was conceived. We believe that one great recommendation of this murder, was, that it would strike amazement and terror into France and Europe, and show that he was prepared to shed any blood, and to sweep before him every obstruction, in his way to absolute power. Certain it is, that the open murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and the justly suspected assassinations of Pichegru and Wright, did create a dread, such as had not been felt before; and whilst on previous occasions some faint breathings of liberty were to be heard in the legislative bodies, only one voice, that of Carnot, was raised against investing Bonaparte with the imperial crown, and laying France an unprotected victim at his feet.

There remain for our consideration other means employed by Bonaparte for building up and establishing his power, of a different character from those we have named, and which on this account we cannot pass without notice. One of these was the Concordat, which he extorted from the Pope, and which professed to re-

establish the Catholic religion in France. Our religious prejudices have no influence on our judgment of this measure. We make no objections to it, as the restoration of a worship which on many accounts we condemn. We view it now simply as an instrument of policy, and in this light, it seems to us no proof of the sagacity of Bonaparte. It helps to confirm in us an impression, which other parts of his history give us, that he did not understand the peculiar character of his age, and the peculiar and original policy which it demanded. He always used commonplace means of power, although the unprecedented times in which he lived, required a system which should combine untried resources, and touch new springs of action. Because old governments had found a convenient prop in religion, Napoleon imagined that it was a necessary appendage and support of his sway, and resolved to restore it. But at this moment there were no foundations in France for a religious establishment, which could give strength and a character of sacredness to the supreme power. There was comparatively no faith, no devout feeling, and still more, no superstition to supply the place of these. The time for the reaction of the religious principle had not yet arrived; and a more likely means of retarding it could hardly have been devised, than the nursing care extended to the church by Bonaparte, the recent Mussulman, the known despiser of the ancient faith, who had no worship at heart but the worship of himself. Instead of bringing religion to the aid of the state, it was impossible that such a man should touch it, without loosening the faint hold which it yet retained on the people. There were none so ignorant as to be the dupes of the First Consul in this particular. Every man, woman, and child, knew that he was playing the part of a juggler. Not one religious association could be formed with his character or government. It was a striking proof of the self-exaggerating vanity of Bonaparte, and of his ignorance of the higher principles of human nature, that he not only hoped to revive and turn to his account the old religion, but imagined that he could, if necessary, have

created a new one. "Had the Pope never existed before, he should have been made for the occasion," was the speech of this political charlatan; as if religious opinion and feeling were things to be manufactured by a consular decree. Ancient legislators, by adopting and sympathising with popular and rooted superstitions, were able to press them into the service of their institutions. They were wise enough to build on a pre-existing faith, and studiously to conform to it. Bonaparte, in a country of infidelity and atheism, and whilst unable to refrain from sarcasms on the system which he patronised, was weak enough to believe that he might make it a substantial support of his government. He undoubtedly congratulated himself on the terms which he exacted from the Pope, and which had never been conceded to the most powerful monarchs; forgetting that his apparent success was the defeat of his plans; for just as far as he severed the church from the supreme pontiff, and placed himself conspicuously at its head, he destroyed the only connexion which could give it influence. Just so far its power over opinion and conscience ceased. It became a coarse instrument of state, contemned by the people, and serving only to demonstrate the aspiring views of its master. Accordingly, the French bishops in general refused to hold their dignities under this new head, preferred exile to the sacrifice of the rights of the church, and left behind them a hearty abhorrence of the Concordat among the more zealous members of their communion. Happy would it have been for Napoleon, had he left the Pope and the church to themselves. By occasionally recognising and employing, and then insulting and degrading the Roman pontiff, he exasperated a large part of Christendom, fastened on himself the brand of impiety, and awakened a religious hatred which contributed its full measure to his fall.

As another means employed by Bonaparte for giving strength and honour to his government, we may name the grandeur of his public works, which he began in his consulate and continued after his accession to the imperial dignity. These dazzled France, and still impress

travellers with admiration. Could we separate these from his history, and did no other indication of his character survive, we should undoubtedly honour him with the title of a beneficent sovereign; but connected as they are, they do little or nothing to change our conceptions of him as an all-grasping, unprincipled usurper. Paris was the chief object of these labours; and surely we cannot wonder, that he who aimed at universal dominion, should strive to improve and adorn the metropolis of his empire. It is the practice of despots to be lavish of expense on the royal residence and the seat of government. Travellers in France, as in other countries of the continent, are struck and pained by the contrast between the magnificent capital and the mud-walled village and uninteresting province. Bonaparte had a special motive for decorating Paris, for "Paris is France," as has often been observed; and in conciliating the vanity of the great city, he secured the obedience of the whole country. The boasted internal improvements of Napoleon scarcely deserve to be named, if we compare their influence with the operation of his public measures. The conscription, which drew from agriculture its most effective labourers, and his continental system, which sealed up every port and annihilated the commerce of his empire, drained and exhausted France to a degree, for which his artificial stimulants of industry, and his splendid projects afforded no compensation. Perhaps the most admired of all his public works, is the road over the Simplon, to which all travellers concur in giving the epithet, stupendous. But it ought not to amaze us, that he who was aspiring at unlimited dominion, should establish communications between the different provinces of his empire. It ought not to amaze us, that he who had scaled the glaciers of St. Bernard, should covet some easier passage for pouring his troops into Italy; nor is it very wonderful, that a sovereign who commanded the revenues of Europe, and who lived in an age when civil engineering had been advanced to a perfection before unknown, should accomplish a bolder enterprise than his predecessors. We would add, that Napoleon must divide with Fab-

ni the glory of the road over the Simplon; for the
ius which contrived and constructed, is more pro-
ly its author than the will which commanded it.
There is however one great work, which gives Bona-
te a fair claim on the gratitude of posterity, and
itles him to an honourable renown. We refer to the
r code of laws, which was given to France under
auspices. His participation in this work has indeed
n unwarrantably and ridiculously magnified. Be-
se he attended the meetings of the commissioners
whom it was assigned, and made some useful and
acious suggestions, he has been praised as if he had
ck out, by the miraculous force of his genius, a new
e of laws. The truth is, that he employed for this
k, as he should have done, the most eminent civil-
s of the empire; and it is also true that these learned
n have little claim to originality; for, as our author
erves, the code "has few peculiarities making a dif-
nce between its principles and those of the Roman
." In other words, they preferred wisdom to nov-
. Still Bonaparte deserves great praise for his in-
st in the work, for the impulse he gave to those to
om it was committed, and for the time and thought,
ch, amidst the cares of a vast empire, he bestowed
n it. That his ambition incited him to this labour,
doubt not. He meant to entwine the laurels of
tinian with those of Alexander. But we will not
rrel with ambition, when it is wise enough to devote
lf to the happiness of mankind. In the present
e, he showed that he understood something of true
y; and we prize the instance more, because it
nds almost alone in his history. We look on the
queror, the usurper, the spoiler of kingdoms, the
tiable despot, with disgust, and see in all these cha-
ers an essential vulgarness of mind. But when we
ard him as a Fountain of Justice to a vast empire,
recognise in him a resemblance to the just and
ignant Deity, and cheerfully accord to him the praise
estowing on a nation one of the greatest gifts which
s permitted to man to confer. It was however the
ery of Bonaparte, a curse brought on him by his

crimes, that he could touch nothing without leaving on it the polluting mark of despotism. His usurpation took from him the power of legislating with magnanimity, where his own interest was concerned. He could provide for the administration of justice between man and man, but not between the citizen and the ruler. Political offences, the very class which ought to be submitted to a jury, were denied that mode of trial. Juries might decide on other criminal questions; but they were not to be permitted to interpose between the despot and the ill-fated subjects who might fall under his suspicion. These were arraigned before "special tribunals, invested with a half-military character," the ready ministers of nefarious prosecutions, and only intended to cloak by legal forms the murderous purpose of the tyrant.

We have thus considered some of the means by which Bonaparte consolidated and extended his power. We now see him advanced to that imperial throne, on which he had long fixed his eager eye. We see France alternately awed and dazzled by the influences we have described, and at last surrendering, by public, deliberate acts, without a struggle or a show of opposition, her rights, liberties, interests, and power, to an absolute master and to his posterity for ever. Thus perished the name and forms of the Republic. Thus perished the hopes of philanthropy. The air, which a few years ago, resounded with the shouts of a great people casting away their chains, and claiming their birthright of freedom, now rung with the servile cries of long life to a blood-stained usurper. There were indeed generous spirits, true patriots, like our own La Fayette, still left in France. But few and scattered, they were left to shed in secret the tears of sorrowful and indignant despair. By this base and disastrous issue of their revolution, the French nation not only renounced their own rights, but brought reproach on the cause of freedom, which years cannot wash away. This is to us a more painful recollection, than all the desolations which France spread through Europe, and than her own bitter sufferings, when the hour of retribution came upon

her. The fields which she laid waste are again waving with harvest; and the groans which broke forth through her cities and villages, when her bravest sons perished by thousands and ten thousands on the snows of Russia, have died away, and her wasted population is renewed. But the wounds which she inflicted on freedom by the crimes perpetrated in that sacred name, and by the abject spirit with which that sacred cause was deserted, are still fresh and bleeding. France not only subjected herself to a tyrant, but what is worse, she has given tyranny everywhere new pleas and arguments, and emboldened it to preach openly, in the face of heaven, the impious doctrines of absolute power and unconditional submission.

Napoleon was now Emperor of France; and a man unacquainted with human nature, would think that such an empire, whose bounds now extended to the Rhine, might have satisfied even an ambitious man. But Bonaparte obeyed that law of progress, to which the highest minds are peculiarly subjected; and acquisition inflamed, instead of appeasing, the spirit of dominion. He had long proposed to himself the conquest of Europe—of the world; and the title of Emperor added intenseness to this purpose. Did we not fear, that by repetition we might impair the conviction which we are most anxious to impress, we would enlarge on the enormity of the guilt involved in the project of universal empire. Napoleon knew distinctly the price which he must pay for the eminence which he coveted. He knew that the path to it lay over wounded and slaughtered millions, over putrefying heaps of his fellow-creatures, over ravaged fields, smoking ruins, pillaged cities. He knew that his steps would be followed by the groans of widowed mothers and famished orphans—of bereaved friendship and despairing love; and that, in addition to this amount of misery, he would create an equal amount of crime, by multiplying indefinitely the instruments and participators of his rapine and fraud. He knew the price and resolved to pay it. But we do not insist on a topic, which few, very few as yet, understand or feel. Turning then for the present, from the moral

aspect of this enterprise, we will view it in another light, which is of great importance to a just estimate of his claims on admiration. We will inquire into the nature and fitness of the measures and policy which he adopted, for compassing the subjugation of Europe and the world.

We are aware, that this discussion may expose us to the charge of great presumption. It may be said, that men having no access to the secrets of cabinets, and no participation in public affairs, are not the best judges of the policy of such a man as Napoleon. This we are not anxious to disprove. We do not deny the disadvantages of our position, nor shall we quarrel with our readers for questioning the soundness of our opinions. But we will say, that though distant, we have not been indifferent observers of the great events of our age, and that though conscious of exposure to many errors, we have a strong persuasion of the substantial correctness of our views. We express, then, without reserve, our belief, that the policy of Napoleon was wanting in sagacity, and that he proved himself incapable, as we before suggested, of understanding the character and answering the demands of his age. His system was a repetition of old means, when the state of the world was new. The sword and the police, which had sufficed him for enslaving France, were not the only powers required for his designs against the human race. Other resources were to be discovered or created; and the genius for calling them forth did not, we conceive, belong to Napoleon.

The circumstances under which Napoleon aspired to universal empire, differed in many respects from those under which former conquerors were placed. It was easy for Rome, when she had subdued kingdoms, to reduce them to provinces and to govern them by force; for nations at that period were bound together by no tie. They had little communication with each other. Differences of origin, of religion, of manners, of language, of modes of warfare; differences aggravated by long and ferocious wars, and by the general want of civilization, prevented joint action, and almost all concern for

one another's fate. Modern Europe, on the other hand, was an assemblage of civilised states, closely connected by commerce, by literature, by a common faith, by interchange of thoughts and improvements, and by a policy which had for ages proposed, as its chief object, the establishment of such a balance of power as would secure national independence. Under these influences the human mind had made great progress; and in truth the French revolution had resulted from an unprecedented excitement and developement of men's faculties, and from the extension of power and intelligence through a vastly wider class, than had participated in them at any former period. The very power which Napoleon was wielding, might be traced to an enthusiasm essentially generous, and manifesting a tendency of the civilised world to better institutions. It is plain that the old plans of conquest, and the maxims of comparatively barbarous ages, did not suit such a state of society. An ambitious man was to make his way, by allying himself with the new movements and excitements of the world. The existence of a vast maritime power like England, which, by its command of the ocean and its extensive commerce, was brought into contact with every community, and which at the same time enjoyed the enviable pre-eminence of possessing the freest institutions in Europe, was of itself a sufficient motive for a great modification of the policy by which one state was now to be placed at the head of the nations. The peculiar character and influence of England, Bonaparte seemed indeed never able to comprehend; and the violent measures by which he essayed to tear asunder the old connexions of that country with the continent, only gave them strength, by adding to the ties of interest those of sympathy, of common suffering, and common danger.

Force and corruption were the great engines of Napoleon, and he plied them without disguise or reserve, not caring how far he insulted and armed against himself, the moral and national feelings of Europe. His great reliance was on the military spirit and energy of the French people. To make France a nation of sol-

a word, Napoleon lived at a period, when he could only establish a durable and universal control, through principles and institutions of some kind or other, to which he would seem to be devoted.

It was impossible, however, for such a man as Napoleon, to adopt, perhaps to conceive, a system such as has now been traced; for it was wholly at war with that egotistical, self-relying, self-exaggerating principle, which was the most striking feature of his mind. He imagined himself able, not only to conquer nations, but to hold them together by the awe and admiration which his own character would inspire; and this bond he preferred to every other. An indirect sway, a control of nations by means of institutions, principles, or prejudices, of which he was to be only the apostle and defender, was utterly inconsistent with that vehemence of will, that passion for astonishing mankind, and that persuasion of his own invincibleness, which were his master feelings, and which made force his darling instrument of dominion. He chose to be the great, palpable, and sole bond of his empire; to have his image reflected from every establishment; to be the centre, in which every ray of glory should meet, and from which every impulse should be propagated. In consequence of this egotism, he never dreamed of adapting himself to the moral condition of the world. The sword was his chosen weapon, and he used it without disguise. He insulted nations as well as sovereigns. He did not attempt to gild their chains, or to fit the yoke gently to their necks. The excess of his extortions, the audacity of his claims, and the insolent language in which Europe was spoken of as the vassal of the great empire, discovered, that he expected to reign, not only without linking himself with the interests, prejudices, and national feelings of men, but by setting all at defiance.

It would be easy to point out a multitude of instances in which he sacrificed the only policy by which he could prevail, to the persuasion that his own greatness could more than balance whatever opposition his violence might awaken. In an age in which Chris-

tianity was exerting some power, there was certainly a degree of deference due to the moral convictions of society. But Napoleon thought himself more than a match for the moral instincts and sentiments of our nature. He thought himself able to cover the most atrocious deeds by the splendour of his name, and even to extort applause for crimes by the brilliancy of his success. He took no pains to conciliate esteem. In his own eyes he was mightier than conscience; and thus he turned against himself the power and resentment of virtue, in every breast where that divine principle yet found a home.

Through the same blinding egotism, he was anxious to fill the thrones of Europe with men bearing his own name, and to multiply everywhere images of himself. Instead of placing over conquered countries efficient men, taken from themselves, who, by upholding better institutions, would carry with them large masses of the people, and who would still, by their hostility to the old dynasties, link their fortunes with his own, he placed over nations such men as Jerome and Murat. He thus spread a jealousy of his power, whilst he rendered it insecure; for as none of the princes of his creation, however well disposed, were allowed to identify themselves with their subjects, and to take root in the public heart, but were compelled to act, openly and without disguise, as satellites and prefects of the French emperor, they gained no hold on their subjects, and could bring no strength to their master in his hour of peril. In none of his arrangements did Napoleon think of securing to his cause the attachment of nations. Astonishment, awe, and force, were his weapons, and his own great name the chosen pillar of his throne.

So far was Bonaparte from magnifying the contrast and distinctions between himself and the old dynasties of Europe, and from attaching men to himself by new principles and institutions, that he had the great weakness, for so we view it, to revive the old forms of monarchy, and to ape the manners of the old court, and thus to connect himself with the herd of legitimate sovereigns. This was not only to rob his government

of that imposing character which might have been given to it, and of that interest which it might have inspired as an improvement on former institutions, but was to become competitor in a race in which he could not but be distanced. He could indeed pluck crowns from the heads of monarchs; but he could not by any means infuse their blood into his veins, associate with himself the ideas which are attached to a long line of ancestry, or give to his court the grace of manners, which belongs to older establishments. His true policy was, to throw contempt on distinctions, which he could not rival; and had he possessed the genius and spirit of the founder of a new era, he would have substituted for a crown, and for other long worn badges of power, a new and simple style of grandeur, and new insignia of dignity, more consonant with an enlightened age, and worthy of one who disdained to be a vulgar king. By the policy which he adopted, if it be worthy of that name, he became a vulgar king, and showed a mind incapable of answering the wants and demands of his age. It is well known, that the progress of intelligence had done much in Europe, to weaken men's reverence for pageantry and show. Nobles had learned to lay aside their trappings in ordinary life, and to appear as gentlemen. Even royalty had begun to retrench its pomp; and in the face of all this improvement, Bonaparte stooped from his height, to study costumes, to legislate about court dresses and court manners, and to outshine his brother monarchs in their own line. He desired to add the glory of master of ceremonies to that of conqueror of nations. In his anxiety to belong to the caste of kings, he exacted scrupulously the observance and etiquette with which they are approached. Not satisfied with this approximation to the old sovereigns, with whom he had no common interest, and from whom he could not have removed himself too far, he sought to ally himself by marriage with the royal families in Europe, to ingraft himself and his posterity on an old imperial tree. This was the very way to turn back opinion into its old channels; to carry back Europe to its old prejudices; to facilitate the restoration of its old order;

ch up legitimacy; to crush every hope that he
work a beneficent change among nations. It
ɜem strange that his egotism did not preserve
ɔm the imitation of antiquated monarchy. But
ɪtism, though excessive, was not lofty, nor was
ɪded by a genius rich and inventive, except in

ıave now followed Napoleon to the height of his
and given our views of the policy by which he
to make that power perpetual and unbounded.
is easily explained. It had its origin in that
f self-reliance and self-exaggeration, of which
e seen so many proofs. It began in Spain.
ountry was a province in reality. He wanted
ɜ it one in name; to place over it a Bonaparte;
ɜ it a more striking manifestation of his power.
is purpose, he "kidnapped" its royal family,
up the unconquerable spirit of its people, and,
edding on its plains and mountains the best blood
ıce, lost it for ever. Next came his expedition
Russia, an expedition against which his wisest
lors remonstrated, but which had every recom-
ion to a man who regarded himself as an excep-
his race, and able to triumph over the laws of
So insane were his self-confidence and impa-
of opposition, that he drove, by his outrages,
ı, the old ally of France, into the arms of Russia,
very moment that he was about to throw himself
ɜ heart of that mighty empire. On his Russian
gn we have no desire to enlarge. Of all the
ıl pages of history, none are more sad than that
records the retreat of the French army from
r. We remember, that when the intelligence
oleon's discomfiture in Russia first reached this
, we were among those who exulted in it, think-
y of the results. But when subsequent and
accounts brought distinctly before our eyes
ıequalled army of France, broken, famished,
ered, seeking shelter under snowdrifts, and per-
ɔy intense cold, we looked back on our joy with
a consciousness of guilt, and expiated by a sin-

cere grief our insensibility to the sufferings of our fellow-creatures. We understand that many interesting notices of Napoleon, as he appeared in this disastrous campaign, are given in the Memoirs of Count Segur, a book, from which we have been repelled by the sorrows and miseries which it details. We can conceive few subjects more worthy of Shakspeare than the mind of Napoleon, at the moment when his fate was sealed; when the tide of his victories was suddenly stopped and rolled backwards; when his dreams of invincibleness were broken as by a peal of thunder; when the word, which had awed nations, died away, on the bleak waste, a powerless sound; and when he, whose spirit Europe could not bound, fled in fear from a captive's doom. The shock must have been tremendous to a mind so imperious, scornful, and unschooled to humiliation. The intense agony of that moment when he gave the unusual orders, to retreat; the desolateness of his soul, when he saw his brave soldiers and his chosen guards sinking in the snows, and perishing in crowds around him; his unwillingness to receive the details of his losses, lest self-possession should fail him; the levity and badinage of his interview with the Abbé de Pradt at Warsaw, discovering a mind labouring to throw off an insupportable weight, wrestling with itself, struggling against misery; and, though last not least, his unconquerable purpose, still clinging to lost empire as the only good of life; these workings of such a spirit would have furnished to the great dramatist a theme worthy of his transcendent powers.

By the irretrievable disasters of the Russian campaign, the empire of the world was effectually placed beyond the grasp of Napoleon. The tide of conquest had ebbed, never to return. The spell which had bound the nations was dissolved. He was no longer the Invincible. The weight of military power, which had kept down the spirit of nations, was removed, and their long smothered sense of wrong and insult broke forth like the fires of a volcano. Bonaparte might still, perhaps, have secured the throne of France; but that of Europe was gone. This, however, he did not, could

would not understand. He had connected with
self too obstinately the character of the world's
ter, to be able to relinquish it. Amidst the dark
ns which gathered round him, he still saw in his
wonderful escapes, and in his own exaggerated
gies, the means of rebuilding his fallen power.
ordingly the thought of abandoning his pretensions
not seem to have crossed his mind, and his irre-
ble defeat was only a summons to new exertion.
doubt, indeed, whether Napoleon, if he could have
rstood fully his condition, would have adopted a dif-
it course. Though despairing, he would probably
raised new armies, and fought to the last. To a
l, which has placed its whole happiness in having
qual, the thought of descending to the level even
ings is intolerable. Napoleon's mind had been
ched by such ideas of universal empire, that France,
gh reaching from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, seemed
ow to him. He could not be shut up in it. Ac-
ingly, as his fortunes darkened, we see no signs of
ting. He could not wear, he said, "a tarnished
n," that is, a crown no brighter than those of Aus-
and Russia. He continued to use a master's tone.
howed no change, but such as opposition works in
obstinate; he lost his temper and grew sour. He
ed reproaches on his marshals and the legislative
. He insulted Metternich, the statesman on whom
e all others his fate depended. He irritated Mu-
y sarcasms, which rankled within him, and accel-
d, if they did not determine, his desertion of his
er. It is a striking example of retribution, that
very vehemence and sternness of his will, which
borne him onward to dominion, now drove him to
ejection of terms which might have left him a for-
ble power, and thus made his ruin entire. Refus-
o take counsel of events, he persevered in fighting
a stubbornness, which reminds us of a spoiled
, who sullenly grasps what he knows he must re-
ish, struggles without hope, and does not give over
ance, until his little fingers are one by one un-
hed from the object on which he has set his heart.

Thus fell Napoleon. We shall follow his history no farther. His retreat to Elba, his irruption into France, his signal overthrow, and his banishment to St. Helena, though they add to the romance of his history, throw no new light on his character, and would of course contribute nothing to our present object. There are indeed incidents in this portion of his life, which are somewhat inconsistent with the firmness and conscious superiority which belonged to him. But a man, into whose character so much impulse, and so little principle entered, must not be expected to preserve unblemished, in such hard reverses, the dignity and self-respect of an emperor and a hero.

In the course of these remarks, our views of the Conqueror, of the First Consul, and of the Emperor, have been given plainly and freely. The subject, however, is so important and interesting, that we have thought it worth our while, though at the hazard of some repetition, to bring together, in a narrower compass, what seem to us the great leading features of the intellectual and moral character of Napoleon Bonaparte.

His intellect was distinguished by rapidity of thought. He understood by a glance what most men, and superior men, could learn only by study. He darted to a conclusion rather by intuition than reasoning. In war, which was the only subject of which he was master, he seized in an instant on the great points of his own and his enemy's positions; and combined at once the movements, by which an overpowering force might be thrown with unexpected fury on a vulnerable part of the hostile line, and the fate of an army be decided in a day. He understood war as a science; but his mind was too bold, rapid, and irrepressible, to be enslaved by the technics of his profession. He found the old armies fighting by rule, and he discovered the true characteristic of genius, which, without despising rules, knows when and how to break them. He understood thoroughly the immense moral power, which is gained by originality and rapidity of operation. He astonished and paralysed his enemies by his unforeseen and impetuous assaults, by the suddenness with which the storm

of battle burst upon them; and, whilst giving to his soldiers the advantages of modern discipline, breathed into them, by his quick and decisive movements, the enthusiasm of ruder ages. This power of disheartening the foe, and of spreading through his own ranks a confidence, and exhilarating courage, which made war a pastime, and seemed to make victory sure, distinguished Napoleon in an age of uncommon military talent, and was one main instrument of his future power.

The wonderful effects of that rapidity of thought, by which Bonaparte was marked, the signal success of his new mode of warfare, and the almost incredible speed with which his fame was spread through nations, had no small agency in fixing his character and determining for a period the fate of empires. These stirring influences infused a new consciousness of his own might. They gave intensity and audacity to his ambition; gave form and substance to his indefinite visions of glory, and raised his fiery hopes to empire. The burst of admiration, which his early career called forth, must in particular have had an influence, in imparting to his ambition that modification by which it was characterised, and which contributed alike to its success and to its fall. He began with *astonishing* the world, with producing a sudden and universal *sensation*, such as modern times had not witnessed. To *astonish* as well as to sway by his energies, became the great aim of his life. Henceforth, to rule was not enough for Bonaparte. He wanted to amaze, to dazzle, to overpower men's souls, by striking, bold, magnificent, and unanticipated results. To govern ever so absolutely would not have satisfied him, if he must have governed silently. He wanted to reign through wonder and awe, by the grandeur and terror of his name, by displays of power which would rivet on him every eye, and make him the theme of every tongue. Power was his supreme object, but a power which should be gazed at as well as felt, which should strike men as a prodigy, which should shake old thrones as an earthquake, and by the suddenness of its new creations should awaken something of the submissive wonder which miraculous agency inspires.

Such seems to us to have been the distinction, or characteristic modification of his love of fame. It was a diseased passion for a kind of admiration, which, from the principles of our nature, cannot be enduring, and which demands for its support perpetual and more stimulating novelty. Mere esteem he would have scorned. Calm admiration, though universal, and enduring, would have been insipid. He wanted to electrify and overwhelm. He lived for effect. The world was his theatre, and he cared little what part he played, if he might walk the sole hero on the stage, and call forth bursts of applause, which would silence all other fame. In war, the triumphs which he coveted were those in which he seemed to sweep away his foes like a whirlwind; and the immense and unparalleled sacrifice of his own soldiers, in the rapid marches and daring assaults to which he owed his victories, in no degree diminished their worth to the victor. In peace, he delighted to hurry through his dominions; to multiply himself by his rapid movements; to gather at a glance the capacities of improvement which every important place possessed; to suggest plans which would startle by their originality and vastness; to project in an instant, works which a life could not accomplish, and to leave behind the impression of a superhuman energy.

Our sketch of Bonaparte would be imperfect indeed, if we did not add, that he was characterised by nothing more strongly than by the spirit of *self-exaggeration*. The singular energy of his intellect and will, through which he had mastered so many rivals and foes, and overcome what seemed insuperable obstacles, inspired a consciousness of being something more than man. His strong original tendencies to pride and self-exaltation, fed and pampered by strange success and unbounded applause, swelled into an almost insane conviction of superhuman greatness. In his own view, he stood apart from other men. He was not to be measured by the standard of humanity. He was not to be retarded by difficulties to which all others yielded. He was not to be subjected to laws and obligations which all others were expected to obey. Nature and the human will

were to bend to his power. He was the child and favourite of fortune, and if not the lord, the chief object of destiny. His history shows a spirit of self-exaggeration, unrivalled in enlightened ages, and which reminds us of an Oriental king to whom incense had been burned from his birth as to a deity. This was the chief source of his crimes. He wanted the sentiment of a common nature with his fellow-beings. He had no sympathies with his race. That feeling of brotherhood, which is developed in truly great souls with peculiar energy, and through which they give up themselves willing victims, joyful sacrifices, to the interests of mankind, was wholly unknown to him. His heart, amidst its wild beatings, never had a throb of disinterested love. The ties which bind man to man he broke asunder. The proper happiness of a man, which consists in the victory of moral energy and social affection over the selfish passions, he cast away for the lonely joy of a despot. With powers, which might have made him a glorious representative and minister of the beneficent Divinity, and with natural sensibilities which might have been exalted into sublime virtues, he chose to separate himself from his kind, to forego their love, esteem, and gratitude, that he might become their gaze, their fear, their wonder; and for this selfish, solitary good, parted with peace and imperishable renown.

This insolent exaltation of himself above the race to which he belonged, broke out in the beginning of his career. His first success in Italy gave him the tone of a master, and he never laid it aside to his last hour. One can hardly help being struck with the *natural* manner with which he arrogates supremacy in his conversation and proclamations. We never feel as if he were putting on a lordly air. In his proudest claims, he speaks from his own mind, and in native language. His style is swollen, but never strained, as if he were conscious of playing a part above his real claims. Even when he was foolish and impious enough to arrogate miraculous powers and a mission from God, his language showed that he thought there was something in his character and exploits to give a colour to his blasphemous

pretensions. The empire of the world seemed to him to be in a measure his due, for nothing short of it corresponded with his conceptions of himself; and he did not use mere verbiage, but spoke a language to which he gave some credit, when he called his successive conquests "the fulfilment of his destiny."

This spirit of self-exaggeration wrought its own misery, and drew down upon him terrible punishments; and this it did by vitiating and perverting his high powers. First, it diseased his fine intellect, gave imagination the ascendency over judgment, turned the inventiveness and fruitfulness of his mind into rash, impatient, restless energies, and thus precipitated him into projects, which, as the wisdom of his counsellors pronounced, were fraught with ruin. To a man whose vanity took him out of the rank of human beings, no foundation for reasoning was left. All things seemed possible. His genius and his fortune were not to be bounded by the barriers which experience had assigned to human powers. Ordinary rules did not apply to him. He even found excitement and motives in obstacles, before which other men would have wavered; for these would enhance the glory of triumph, and give a new thrill to the admiration of the world. Accordingly he again and again plunged into the depths of an enemy's country, and staked his whole fortune and power on a single battle. To be rash was indeed the necessary result of his self-exalting and self-relying spirit; for to dare what no other man would dare, to accomplish what no other man would attempt, was the very way to display himself as a superior being in his own and others' eyes. To be impatient and restless, was another necessary issue of the attributes we have described. The calmness of wisdom was denied him. He, who was next to omnipotent in his own eyes, and who delighted to strike and astonish by sudden and conspicuous operations, could not brook delay or wait for the slow operations of time. A work, which was to be gradually matured by the joint agency of various causes, could not suit a man, who wanted to be felt as the great, perhaps only, cause; who wished to stamp

his own agency in the most glaring characters on whatever he performed; and who hoped to rival by a sudden energy the steady and progressive works of nature. Hence so many of his projects were never completed, or only announced. They swelled however the tide of flattery, which ascribed to him the completion of what was not yet begun, whilst his restless spirit, rushing to new enterprises, forgot its pledges, and left the promised prodigies of his creative genius to exist only in the records of adulation. Thus the rapid and inventive intellect of Bonaparte was depraved, and failed to achieve a growing and durable greatness. It reared indeed a vast and imposing structure, but disproportioned, disjointed, without strength, without foundations. One strong blast was enough to shake and shatter it, nor could his genius uphold it. Happy would it have been for his fame, had he been buried in its ruins!

One of the striking properties of Bonaparte's character was decision, and this, as we have already seen, was perverted, by the spirit of self-exaggeration, into an inflexible stubbornness, which counsel could not enlighten, nor circumstances bend. Having taken the first step, he pressed onward. His purpose he wished others to regard as a law of nature, or a decree of destiny. It *must* be accomplished. Resistance but strengthened it; and so often had resistance been overborne, that he felt as if his unconquerable will, joined to his matchless intellect, could vanquish all things. On such a mind, the warnings of human wisdom and of Providence were spent in vain; and the Man of Destiny lived to teach others, if not himself, the weakness and folly of that all-defying decision, which arrays the purposes of a mortal with the immutableness of the counsels of the Most High.

A still more fatal influence of the spirit of self-exaggeration which characterised Bonaparte, remains to be named. It depraved to an extraordinary degree his moral sense. It did not obliterate altogether the ideas of duty, but, by a singular perversion, it impelled him to apply them exclusively to others. It never seemed to enter his thought, that he was subject to the great

obligations of morality, which all others are called to respect. He was an exempted being. Whatever stood in his way to empire, he was privileged to remove. Treaties only bound his enemies. No nation had rights but his own France. He claimed a monopoly in perfidy and violence. He was not naturally cruel; but when human life obstructed his progress, it was a lawful prey, and murder and assassination occasioned as little compunction as war. The most luminous exposition of his moral code, was given in his counsels to the king of Holland. "Never forget, that in the situation to which my political system and the interests of my empire have called you, your first duty is towards ME, your second towards France. All your other duties, even those towards the people whom I have called you to govern, rank after these." To his own mind he was the source and centre of duty. He was too peculiar and exalted, to be touched by that vulgar stain called guilt. Crimes ceased to be such, when perpetrated by himself. Accordingly he always speaks of his transgressions as of indifferent acts. He never imagined that they tarnished his glory, or diminished his claim on the homage of the world. In St. Helena, though talking perpetually of himself, and often reviewing his guilty career, we are not aware that a single compunction escapes him. He speaks of his life as calmly as if it had been consecrated to duty and beneficence, whilst in the same breath he has the audacity to reproach unsparingly the faithlessness of almost every individual and nation, with whom he had been connected. We doubt whether history furnishes so striking an example of the moral blindness and obduracy to which an unbounded egotism exposes and abandons the mind.

His spirit of self-exaggeration was seen in his openness to adulation. Policy indeed prompted him to put his praises into the mouths of the venal slaves, who administered his despotism. But flattery would not have been permitted to swell into exaggerations, now nauseous, now ludicrous, and now impious, if, in the bosom of the chief, there had not lodged a flatterer who sounded a louder note of praise than all around him.

He was remarkably sensitive to opinion, and resented as a wrong the suppression of his praises. The press of all countries was watched, and free states were called upon to curb it for daring to take liberties with his name. Even in books published in France on general topics, he expected a recognition of his authority. Works of talent were suppressed, when their authors refused to offer incense at the new shrine. He resolved indeed to stamp his name on the literature, as on the legislation, policy, warfare of his age, and to compel genius, whose pages survive statues, columns, and empires, to take a place among his tributaries.

We close our view of Bonaparte's character, by saying, that his original propensities, released from restraint and pampered by indulgence to a degree seldom allowed to mortals, grew up into a spirit of despotism as stern and absolute as ever usurped the human heart. The love of power and supremacy absorbed, consumed him. No other passion, no domestic attachment, no private friendship, no love of pleasure, no relish for letters or the arts, no human sympathy, no human weakness, divided his mind with the passion for dominion and for dazzling manifestations of his power. Before this, duty, honour, love, humanity fell prostrate. Josephine, we are told, was dear to him; but the devoted wife, who had stood firm and faithful in the day of his doubtful fortunes, was cast off in his prosperity, to make room for a stranger, who might be more subservient to his power. He was affectionate, we are told, to his brothers and mother; but his brothers, the moment they ceased to be his tools, were disgraced; and his mother, it is said, was not allowed to sit in the presence of her imperial son.* He was sometimes softened, we are told, by the sight of the field of battle strewn with the wounded and dead. But if the Moloch of his ambition claimed new heaps of slain to-morrow, it was never denied. With all his sensibility, he gave millions to the sword, with as little compunction as he

* See "America," page 57. We should not give this very unamiable trait of Napoleon's domestic character, but on authority which we cannot question.

would have brushed away so many insects, which had infested his march. To him, all human will, desire, power, were to bend. His superiority, none might question. He insulted the fallen, who had contracted the guilt of opposing his progress; and not even woman's loveliness, and the dignity of a queen, could give shelter from his contumely. His allies were his vassals, nor was their vassalage concealed. Too lofty to use the arts of conciliation, preferring command to persuasion, overbearing, and all-grasping, he spread distrust, exasperation, fear, and revenge through Europe; and when the day of retribution came, the old antipathies and mutual jealousies of nations were swallowed up in one burning purpose to prostrate the common tyrant, the universal foe.

Such was Napoleon Bonaparte. But some will say, he was still a great man. This we mean not to deny. But we would have it understood, that there are various kinds or orders of greatness, and that the highest did not belong to Bonaparte. There are different orders of greatness. Among these, the first rank is unquestionably due to *moral* greatness, or magnanimity; to that sublime energy, by which the soul, smitten with the love of virtue, binds itself indissolubly, for life and for death, to truth and duty; espouses as its own the interests of human nature; scorns all meanness and defies all peril; hears in its own conscience a voice louder than threatenings and thunders; withstands all the powers of the universe, which would sever it from the cause of freedom and religion; reposes an unfaltering trust in God in the darkest hour, and is ever "ready to be offered up" on the altar of its country or of mankind. Of this moral greatness, which throws all other forms of greatness into obscurity, we see not a trace in Napoleon. Though clothed with the power of a god, the thought of consecrating himself to the introduction of a new and higher era, to the exaltation of the character and condition of his race, seems never to have dawned on his mind. The spirit of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice seems not to have waged a moment's war with self-will and ambition. His ruling passions,

leed, were singularly at variance with magnanimity. ɔral greatness has too much simplicity, is too unos- ıtatious, too self-subsistent, and enters into others' erests with too much heartiness, to live an hour for ıat Napoleon always lived, to make itself the theme, d gaze, and wonder of a dazzled world. Next to ɔral, comes *intellectual* greatness, or genius in the ;hest sense of that word; and by this, we mean that ɔlime capacity of thought, through which the soul, itten with the love of the true and the beautiful, es- ɾs to comprehend the universe, soars into the heavens, ıetrates the earth, penetrates itself, questions the ɜt, anticipates the future, traces out the general and ·comprehending laws of nature, binds together by ıumerable affinities and relations all the objects of its ɔwledge, rises from the finite and transient to the in- ite and the everlasting, frames to itself from its own ness lovelier and sublimer forms than it beholds, dis- rns the harmonies between the world within and the ɪrld without us, and finds in every region of the uni- rse types and interpreters of its own deep mysteries d glorious inspirations. This is the greatness which longs to philosophers, and to the master spirits in etry and the fine arts. Next comes the greatness of *tion;* and by this we mean the sublime power of nceiving bold and extensive plans; of constructing d bringing to bear on a mighty object a complicated ıchinery of means, energies and arrangements, and of complishing great outward effects. To this head be- ıgs the greatness of Bonaparte, and that he possessed we need not prove, and none will be hardy enough to ny. A man, who raised himself from obscurity to a rone, who changed the face of the world, who made nself felt through powerful and civilised nations, who ıt the terror of his name across seas and oceans, ıose will was pronounced and feared as destiny, ıose donatives were crowns, whose antechamber was ronged by submissive princes, who broke down the ɪful barrier of the Alps and made them a highway, and ıose fame was spread beyond the boundaries of civili- tion to the steppes of the Cossack, and the deserts of

the Arab; a man, who has left this record of himself in history, has taken out of our hands the question, whether he shall be called great. All must concede to him a sublime power of action, an energy equal to great effects.

We are not disposed, however, to consider him as pre-eminent even in this order of greatness. War was his chief sphere. He gained his ascendency in Europe by the sword. But war is not the field for the highest active talent, and Napoleon, we suspect, was conscious of this truth. The glory of being the greatest general of his age, would not have satisfied him. He would have scorned to take his place by the side of Marlborough or Turenne. It was as the founder of an empire, which threatened for a time to comprehend the world, and which demanded other talents besides that of war, that he challenged unrivalled fame. And here we question his claim. Here we cannot award him supremacy. The project of universal empire, however imposing, was not original. The revolutionary governments of France had adopted it before; nor can we consider it as a sure indication of greatness, when we remember that the weak and vain mind of Louis XIV. was large enough to cherish it. The question is; Did Napoleon bring to this design the capacity of advancing it by bold and original conceptions, adapted to an age of civilisation, and of singular intellectual and moral excitement? Did he discover new foundations of power? Did he frame new bonds of union for subjugated nations? Did he discover, or originate, some common interests by which his empire might be held together? Did he breathe a spirit which should supplant the old national attachments, or did he invent any substitutes for those vulgar instruments of force and corruption, which any and every usurper would have used? Never in the records of time, did the world furnish such materials to work with, such means of modelling nations afresh, of building up a new power, of introducing a new era, as did Europe at the period of the French revolution. Never was the human mind so capable of new impulses. And did Napoleon prove himself equal to the condition of the world? Do we detect one origi-

al conception in his means of universal empire? Did e seize on the enthusiasm of his age, that powerful rinciple, more efficient than arms or policy, and bend it) his purpose? What did he do but follow the beaten 'ack? but apply force and fraud in their very coarsest ›rms? Napoleon showed a vulgar mind, when he as- ımed self-interest as the sole spring of human action. Vith the sword in one hand and bribes in the other, he nagined himself absolute master of the human mind. 'he strength of moral, national, and domestic feeling, e could not comprehend. The finest, and after all, ıe most powerful elements in human nature, hardly ıtered into his conceptions of it; and how then could e have established a durable power over the human ıce? We want little more to show his want of origi- ılity and comprehensiveness, as the founder of an em- ıre, than the simple fact, that he chose as his chief ›unsellors Talleyrand and Fouché, names which speak ›r themselves. We may judge of the greatness of ıe master-spirit, from the minds which he found most ›ngenial with his own. In war, Bonaparte was great; ›r he was bold, original, and creative. Beyond the ımp, he indeed showed talent, but not superior to that f other eminent men.

There have been two circumstances, which have one much to disarm or weaken the strong moral re- robation with which Bonaparte ought to have been ›garded, and which we deem worthy of notice. We ›fer to the wrongs which he is supposed to have suf- ›red at St. Helena, and to the unworthy use which ıe Allied Powers have made of their triumph over Iapoleon. First, his supposed wrongs at St. Helena, ave excited a sympathy in his behalf, which has thrown veil over his crimes. We are not disposed to deny, ıat an unwarrantable, because unnecessary, severity 'as exercised towards Bonaparte. We think it not ery creditable to the British government, that it tor- ıred a sensitive captive by refusing him a title which e had long worn. We think that not only religion and umanity, but self-respect, forbids us to inflict a single seless pang on a fallen foe. But we should be weak

indeed, if the moral judgments and feelings, with which Napoleon's career ought to be reviewed, should give place to sympathy with the sufferings by which it was closed. With regard to the scruples which not a few have expressed as to the right of banishing him to St. Helena, we can only say, that our consciences are not yet refined to such exquisite delicacy, as to be at all sensitive on this particular. We admire nothing more in Bonaparte, than the effrontery with which he claimed protection from the laws of nations. That a man, who had set these laws at open defiance, should fly to them for shelter; that the oppressor of the world should claim its sympathy as an oppressed man, and that his claim should find advocates; these things are to be set down among the extraordinary events of this extraordinary age. Truly the human race is in a pitiable state. It may be trampled on, spoiled, loaded like a beast of burden, made the prey of rapacity, insolence, and the sword; but it must not touch a hair, or disturb the pillow of one of its oppressors, unless it can find chapter and verse in the code of national law, to authorise its rudeness towards the privileged offender. For ourselves, we should rejoice to see every tyrant, whether a usurper or hereditary prince, fastened to a lonely rock in the ocean. Whoever gives clear, undoubted proof, that he is prepared and sternly resolved to make the earth a slaughter-house, and to crush every will adverse to his own, ought to be caged like a wild beast; and to require mankind to proceed against him according to written laws and precedents, as if he were a private citizen in a quiet court of justice, is just as rational as to require a man, in eminent peril from an assassin, to wait and prosecute his murderer according to the most protracted forms of law. There are great solemn rights of nature, which precede laws, and on which law is founded. There are great exigencies in human affairs, which speak for themselves, and need no precedent to teach the right path. There are awful periods in the history of our race, which do not belong to its ordinary state, and which are not to be governed and judged by ordinary rules. Such a period was that,

when Bonaparte, by infraction of solemn engagements, had thrown himself into France, and convulsed all Europe; and they, who confound this with the ordinary events of history, and see in Bonaparte but an ordinary foe to the peace and independence of nations, have certainly very different intellects from our own.

We confess, too, that we are not only unable to see the wrong done to Napoleon in sending him to St. Helena, but that we cannot muster up much sympathy for the inconveniences and privations which he endured there. Our sympathies in this particular are wayward and untractable. When we would carry them to that solitary island, and fasten them on the illustrious victim of British cruelty, they will not tarry there, but take their flight across the Mediterranean to Jaffa, and across the Atlantic to the platform where the Duke d'Enghien was shot, to the prison of Toussaint, and to fields of battle where thousands at his bidding lay weltering in blood. When we strive to fix our thoughts upon the sufferings of the injured hero, other and more terrible sufferings, of which he was the cause, rush upon us; and his complaints, however loud and angry, are drowned by groans and execrations, which fill our ears from every region which he traversed. We have no tears to spare for fallen greatness, when that greatness was founded in crime, and reared by force and perfidy. We reserve them for those on whose ruin it rose. We keep our sympathies for our race, for human nature in its humbler forms, for the impoverished peasant, the widowed mother, the violated virgin; and are even perverse enough to rejoice, that the ocean has a prison-house, where the author of those miseries may be safely lodged. Bonaparte's history is to us too solemn, the wrongs for which humanity and freedom arraign him, are too flagrant, to allow us to play the part of sentimentalists around his grave at St. Helena. We leave this to the more refined age in which we live; and we do so in the hope that an age is coming of less tender mould, but of loftier, sterner feeling, and of deeper sympathy with the whole human race. Should our humble page then live, we trust with an undoubting

faith, that the uncompromising indignation with which we plead the cause of our oppressed and insulted nature, will not be set down to the account of vindictiveness and hardness of heart.

We observed that the moral indignation of many towards Bonaparte had been impaired or turned away, not only by his supposed wrongs, but by the unworthy use which his conquerors made of their triumph. We are told, that bad as was his despotism, the Holy Alliance is a worse one; and that Napoleon was less a scourge, than the present coalition of the continental monarchs, framed for the systematic suppression of freedom. By such reasoning, his crimes are cloaked, and his fall made a theme of lamentation. It is not one of the smallest errors and sins of the Allied Sovereigns, that they have contrived, by their base policy, to turn the resentments and moral displeasure of men from the usurper upon themselves. For these sovereigns we have no defence to offer. We yield to none in detestation of the Holy Alliance, profanely so called. To us its doctrines are as false and pestilent, as any broached by Jacobinism. The Allied Monarchs are adding to the other wrongs of despots, that of flagrant ingratitude; of ingratitude to the generous and brave nations, to whom they owe their thrones, whose spirit of independence and patriotism, and whose hatred of the oppressor, contributed more than standing armies, to raise up the fallen, and to strengthen the falling monarchies of Europe. Be it never forgotten in the records of despotism, let history record it on her most durable tablet, that the first use made by the principal continental sovereigns of their regained or confirmed power, was, to conspire against the hopes and rights of the nations by whom they had been saved; to combine the military power of Europe against free institutions, against the press, against the spirit of liberty and patriotism which had sprung up in the glorious struggle with Napoleon, against the right of the people to exert an influence on the governments by which their dearest interests were to be controlled. Never be it forgotten, that such was the honour of sovereigns—such their re-

quital for the blood which had been shed freely in their defence. Freedom and humanity send up a solemn and prevailing cry against them, to that tribunal, where kings and subjects are soon to stand as equals.

But still we should be strangely blind, if we were not to feel that the fall of Napoleon was a blessing to the world. Who can look, for example, at France, and not see there a degree of freedom which could never have grown up under the terrible frown of the usurper? True, Bonaparte's life, though it seemed a charmed one, must at length have ended; and we are told that then his empire would have been broken, and that the general crash, by some inexplicable process, would have given birth to a more extensive and durable liberty than can now be hoped. But such anticipations seem to us to be built on a strange inattention to the nature and inevitable consequences of Napoleon's power. It was wholly a military power. He was literally turning Europe into a camp, and drawing its best talent into one occupation, war. Thus Europe was retracing its steps to those ages of calamity and darkness, when the only law was the sword. The progress of centuries, which had consisted chiefly in the substitution of intelligence, public opinion, and other mild and rational influences, for brutal force, was to be reversed. At Bonaparte's death, his empire must indeed have been dissolved; but military chiefs, like Alexander's lieutenants, would have divided it. The sword alone would have shaped its future communities; and after years of desolation and bloodshed, Europe would have found, not repose, but a respite, an armed truce, under warriors, whose only title to empire would have been their own good blades, and the weight of whose thrones would have been upheld by military force alone. Amidst such convulsions, during which the press would have been everywhere fettered, and the military spirit would have triumphed over and swallowed up the spirit and glory of letters and liberal arts, we greatly fear, that the human intellect would have lost its present impulse, its thirst for progress, and would have fallen back towards barbarism. Let not the friends of freedom bring dishonour

on themselves or desert their cause, by instituting comparisons between Napoleon and legitimate sovereigns, which may be construed into eulogies on the former. For ourselves, we have no sympathy with tyranny, whether it bear the name of usurpation or legitimacy. We are not pleading the cause of the Allied Sovereigns. In our judgment, they have contracted the very guilt against which they have pretended to combine. In our apprehension, a conspiracy against the rights of the human race, is as foul a crime as rebellion against the rights of sovereigns; nor is there less of treason in warring against public freedom, than in assailing royal power. Still we are bound in truth to confess, that the Allied Sovereigns are not to be ranked with Bonaparte, whose design against the independence of nations and the liberties of the world, in this age of civilisation, liberal thinking, and Christian knowledge, is in our estimation, the most nefarious enterprise recorded in history.

The series of events, which it has been our province to review, offers subjects of profound thought and solemn instruction to the moralist and politician. We have retraced it with many painful feelings. It shows us a great people, who had caught some indistinct glimpses of freedom, and of a nobler and a happier political constitution, betrayed by their leaders, and brought back, by a military despot, to heavier chains than they had broken. We see with indignation one man, a man like ourselves, subjecting whole nations to his absolute rule. It is this wrong and insult to our race which has chiefly moved us. Had a storm of God's ordination, passed over Europe, prostrating its capitals, sweeping off its villages, burying millions in ruins, we should have wept, we should have trembled. But in this there would have been only wretchedness. Now we see also debasement. To us there is something radically, and increasingly shocking, in the thought of one man's will becoming a law to his race; in the thought of multitudes, of vast communities, surrendering conscience, intellect, their affections, their rights, their interests, to the stern man-

date of a fellow-creature. When we see one word of a frail man on the throne of France, tearing a hundred thousand sons from their homes, breaking asunder the sacred ties of domestic life, sentencing myriads of the young to make murder their calling and rapacity their means of support, and extorting from nations their treasures to extend this ruinous sway, we are ready to ask ourselves, Is not this a dream? And when the sad reality comes home to us, we blush for a race which can stoop to such an abject lot. At length, indeed, we see the tyrant humbled, stripped of power; but stripped by those who, in the main, are not unwilling to play the despot on a narrower scale, and to break down the spirit of nations under the same iron sway.

How is it, that tyranny has thus triumphed? that the hopes with which we greeted the French revolution have been crushed? that a usurper plucked up the last roots of the tree of liberty, and planted despotism in its place? The chief cause is not far to seek, nor can it be too often urged on the friends of freedom. France failed through the want of that moral preparation for liberty, without which the blessing cannot be secured. She was not ripe for the good she sought. She was too corrupt for freedom. France had indeed to contend with great political ignorance; but had not ignorance been reinforced by deep moral defect, she might have won her way to free institutions. Her character forbade her to be free; and it now seems strange that we could ever have expected her to secure this boon. How could we believe, that a liberty, of which that heartless scoffer Voltaire was a chief apostle, could have triumphed? Most of the preachers of French liberty had thrown off all the convictions which ennoble the mind. Man's connexion with God they broke, for they declared that there was no God in whom to trust in the great struggle for liberty. Human immortality, that truth which is the seed of all greatness, they derided. To their philosophy, man was a creature of chance, a compound of matter, an ephemeron, a worm, who was soon to rot and perish for ever. What insanity was it to expect, that such men were to work out the

emancipation of their race! that in such hands the hopes and dearest rights of humanity were secure! Liberty was tainted by their touch, polluted by their breath, and yet we trusted that it was to rise in health and glory from their embrace. We looked to men, who openly founded morality on private interest, for the sacrifices, the devotion, the heroic virtue, which Freedom always demands from her assertors.

The great cause of the discomfiture of the late European struggle for liberty, is easily understood by an American, who recurs to the history of his own revolution. This issued prosperously, because it was begun and was conducted under the auspices of private and public virtue. Our liberty did not come to us by accident, nor was it the gift of a few leaders; but its seeds were sown plentifully in the minds of the whole people. It was rooted in the conscience and reason of the nation. It was the growth of deliberate convictions and generous principles liberally diffused. We had no Paris, no metropolis, which a few leaders swayed, and which sent forth its influences, like "a mighty heart," through dependent and subservient provinces. The country was all heart. The living principle pervaded the community, and every village added strength to the solemn purpose of being free. We have here an explanation of a striking fact in the history of our revolution; we mean the want or absence of that description of great men, whom we meet in other countries; men who, by their distinct and single agency, and by their splendid deeds, determine a nation's fate. There was too much greatness in the American people, to admit this overshadowing greatness of leaders. Accordingly, the United States had no liberator, no political saviour. Washington indeed conferred on us great blessings. But Washington was not a hero, in the common sense of that word. We never spoke of him as the French did of Bonaparte, never talked of his eagle-eyed, irresistible genius, as if this were to work out our safety. We never lost our self-respect. We felt that, under God, we were to be free through our own courage, energy, and wisdom, under the animating and guiding

influences of this great and good mind. Washington served us chiefly by his sublime moral qualities. To him belonged the proud distinction of being the leader in a revolution, without awakening one doubt or solicitude as to the spotless purity of his purpose. His was the glory of being the brightest manifestation of the spirit which reigned in his country; and in this way he became a source of energy, a bond of union, the centre of an enlightened people's confidence. In such a revolution as that of France, Washington would have been nothing; for that sympathy, which subsisted between him and his fellow-citizens, and which was the secret of his power, would have been wanting. By an instinct which is unerring, we call Washington, with grateful reverence, the father of his country, but not its saviour. A people which wants a saviour, which does not possess an earnest and pledge of freedom in its own heart, is not yet ready to be free.

A great question here offers itself, at which we can only glance. If a moral preparation is required for freedom, how, it is asked, can Europe ever be free? How, under the despotisms which now crush the continent, can nations grow ripe for liberty? Is it to be hoped, that men will learn, in the school of slavery, the spirit and virtues which, we are told, can alone work out their deliverance? In the absolute governments of Europe, the very instruments of forming an enlightened and generous love of freedom, are bent into the service of tyranny. The press is an echo of the servile doctrines of the court. The schools and seminaries of education are employed to taint the young mind with the maxims of despotism. Even Christianity is turned into a preacher of legitimacy, and its temples are desecrated by the abject teaching of unconditional submission. How then is the spirit of a wise and moral freedom to be generated and diffused? We have stated the difficulty in its full force; for nothing is gained by winking out of sight the tremendous obstacles, with which liberal principles and institutions must contend. We have not time at present to answer the great question now proposed. We will only say, that we do not

despair; and we will briefly suggest what seems to us the chief expedient, by which the cause of freedom, obstructed as it is, must now be advanced. In despotic countries, those men whom God has inspired with lofty sentiments and a thirst for freedom (and such are spread through all Europe), must, in their individual capacity, communicate themselves to individual minds. The cause of liberty on the continent cannot now be forwarded by the action of men in masses. But in every country there are those who feel their degradation and their wrongs, who abhor tyranny as the chief obstruction of the progress of nations, and who are willing and prepared to suffer for liberty. Let such men spread around them their own spirit, by every channel which a jealous despotism has not closed. Let them give utterance to sentiments of magnanimity in private conference, and still more by the press; for there are modes of clothing and expressing kindling truths, which, it is presumed, no censorship would dare to proscribe. Let them especially teach that great truth, which is the seminal principle of a virtuous freedom, and the very foundation of morals and religion; we mean, the doctrine, that conscience, the voice of God in every heart, is to be listened to above all other guides and lords; that there is a sovereign within us, clothed with more awful powers and rights than any outward king; and that he alone is worthy the name of a man, who gives himself up solemnly, deliberately, to obey this internal guide through peril and in death. This is the spirit of freedom; for no man is wholly and immutably free but he who has broken every outward yoke, that he may obey his own deliberate conscience. This is the lesson to be taught alike in republics and despotisms. As yet it has but dawned on the world. Its full application remains to be developed. They who have been baptised by a true experience, into this vital and all-comprehending truth, must everywhere be its propagators; and he who makes one convert of it near a despot's throne, has broken one link of that despot's chain. It is chiefly in the diffusion of this loftiness of moral sentiment, that we place our hope of freedom; and we have a hope,

because we know that there are those who have drunk into this truth, and are ready, when God calls, to be its martyrs. We do not despair, for there is a contagion, we would rather say, a divine power, in sublime moral principle. This is our chief trust. We have less and less hope from force and bloodshed, as the instruments of working out man's redemption from slavery. History shows us not a few princes, who have gained or strengthened thrones by assassination or war. But freedom, which is another name for justice, honour, and benevolence, scorns to use the private dagger, and wields with trembling the public sword. The true conspiracy before which tyranny is to fall, is that of virtuous, elevated minds, which shall consecrate themselves to the work of awakening in men a consciousness of the rights, powers, purposes, and greatness of human nature; which shall oppose to force, the heroism of intellect and conscience, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. We believe that, at this moment, there are virtue and wisdom enough to shake despotic thrones, were they as confiding as they should be, in God and in their own might, and were they to pour themselves through every channel into the public mind.

We close our present labours, with commending to the protection of Almighty God the cause of human freedom and improvement. We adore the wisdom and goodness of his providence, which has ordained, that liberty shall be wrought out by the magnanimity, courage, and sacrifices of men. We bless him for the glorious efforts which this cause has already called forth; for the intrepid defenders who have gathered round it, and whose fame is a most precious legacy of past ages; for the toils and sufferings by which it has been upheld; for the awakening and thrilling voice which comes to us from the dungeon and scaffold, where the martyrs of liberty have pined or bled. We bless him, that even tyranny has been overruled for good, by exciting a resistance which has revealed to us the strength of virtuous principle in the human soul. We beseech this Great and Good Parent, from whom all pure influences proceed, to enkindle, by his quickening breath, an unquenchable

love of virtue and freedom in those favoured men, whom he hath enriched and signalised by eminent gifts and powers, that they may fulfil the high function of inspiring their fellow-beings with a consciousness of the birthright and destination of human nature. Wearied with violence and blood, we beseech him to subvert oppressive governments, by the gentle, yet awful power of truth and virtue; by the teachings of uncorrupted Christianity; by the sovereignty of enlightened opinion; by the triumph of sentiments of magnanimity; by mild, rational, and purifying influences, which will raise the spirit of the enslaved, and which sovereigns will be unable to withstand. For this peaceful revolution we earnestly pray. If, however, after long, forbearing, and unavailing applications to justice and humanity, the friends of freedom should be summoned, by the voice of God within, and by his providence abroad, to vindicate their rights with other arms—to do a sterner work—to repel despotic force by force, may they not forget, even in this hour of provocation, the spirit which their high calling demands. Let them take the sword with awe, as those on whom a holy function is devolved. Let them regard themselves as ministers and delegates of Him, whose dearest attribute is mercy. Let them not stain their sacred cause by one cruel deed, by the infliction of one needless pang, by shedding without cause one drop of human blood.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

PART II.

In a former number of our work,* we reviewed the life and character of Napoleon Bonaparte. We resume the subject, not for the purpose of speaking more largely of the individual, but that we may consider more distinctly the *principle of action* which governed him, and of which he was a remarkable manifestation.

Power was the idol to which Bonaparte sacrificed himself. To gain supremacy and unlimited sway, to subject men to his will, was his chief, settled, unrelenting purpose. This passion drew and converted into itself the whole energy of his nature. The love of power, that common principle, explains, in a great degree, his character and life. His crimes did not spring from any impulse peculiar to himself. With all his contempt of the human race, he still belonged to it. It is true both of the brightest virtues and the blackest vices, though they seem to set apart their possessors from the rest of mankind, that the seeds of them are sown in every human breast. The man, who attracts and awes us by his intellectual and moral grandeur, is only an example and anticipation of the improvements, for which every mind was endowed with reason and conscience; and the worst man has become such by the perversion and excess of desires and appetites which he shares with his whole race. Napoleon had no element of character which others do not possess. It was his misery and guilt that he was usurped and absorbed by one

* Christian Examiner, Vol. IV. No. V.

passion; that his whole mind shot up into one growth; that his singular strength of thought and will, which, if consecrated to virtue, would have enrolled him among the benefactors of mankind, was enslaved by one lust. He is not to be gazed on as a miracle. He was a manifestation of our own nature. He teaches on a large scale what thousands teach on a narrow one. He shows us the greatness of the ruin which is wrought, when the order of the mind is subverted, conscience dethroned, and a strong passion left without restraint to turn every inward and outward resource to the accomplishment of a selfish purpose.

The influence of the *love of power* on human affairs, is so constant, unbounded, and tremendous, that we think this principle of our nature worthy of distinct consideration, and shall devote to it a few pages, as a fit sequel to our notice of Bonaparte.

The passion for power is one of the most universal; nor is it to be regarded as a crime in all its forms. Sweeping censures on a natural sentiment cast blame on the Creator. This principle shows itself in the very dawn of our existence. The child never exults and rejoices more, than when it becomes conscious of power by overcoming difficulties, or compassing new ends. All our desires and appetites lend aid and energy to this passion, for all find increase of gratification in proportion to the growth of our strength and influence. We ought to add, that this principle is fed from nobler sources. Power is a chief element of all the commanding qualities of our nature. It enters into all the higher virtues; such as magnanimity, fortitude, constancy. It enters into intellectual eminence. It is power of thought and utterance, which immortalises the products of genius. Is it strange that an attribute, through which all our passions reach their objects, and which characterises whatever is great or admirable in man, should awaken intense desire, and be sought as one of the chief goods of life?

This principle, we have said, is not in all its forms a crime. There are indeed various kinds of power, which it is our duty to covet, accumulate, and hold fast.

First, there is *inward* power, the most precious of all possessions; power over ourselves; power to withstand trial, to bear suffering, to front danger; power over pleasure and pain; power to follow our convictions, however resisted by menace or scorn; the power of calm reliance in seasons of darkness and storms. Again, there is a power over *outward* things; the power by which the mind triumphs over matter, presses into its service the subtilest and strongest elements, makes the winds, fire, and steam its ministers, rears the city, opens a path through the ocean, and makes the wilderness blossom as the rose. These forms of power, especially the first, are glorious distinctions of our race, nor can we prize them too highly.

There is another power, which is our principal concern in the present discussion. We mean power over our fellow-creatures. It is this which ambition chiefly covets, and which has instigated to more crime, and spread more misery than any other cause. We are not however to condemn even this universally. There is a truly noble sway of man over man; one, which it is our honour to seek and exert; which is earned by well-doing; which is a chief recompense of virtue. We refer to the quickening influence of a good and great mind over other minds, by which it brings them into sympathy with itself. Far from condemning this, we are anxious to hold it forth as the purest glory which virtuous ambition can propose. The power of awakening, enlightening, elevating our fellow-creatures, may, with peculiar fitness, be called divine; for there is no agency of God so beneficent and sublime as that which he exerts on rational natures, and by which he assimilates them to himself. This sway over other souls is the surest test of greatness. We admire, indeed, the energy which subdues the material creation, or developes the physical resources of a state. But it is a nobler might which calls forth the intellectual and moral resources of a people, which communicates new impulses to society, throws into circulation new and stirring thoughts, gives the mind a new consciousness of its faculties, and rouses and fortifies the will to an unconquerable purpose of

well-doing. This spiritual power is worth all other. To improve man's outward condition is a secondary agency, and is chiefly important as it gives the means of inward growth. The most glorious minister of God on earth, is he who speaks with a life-giving energy to other minds, breathing into them the love of truth and virtue, strengthening them to suffer in a good cause, and lifting them above the senses and the world.

We know not a more exhilarating thought, than that this power is given to men; that we can not only change the face of the outward world, and by virtuous discipline improve ourselves, but that we may become springs of life and light to our fellow-beings. We are thus admitted to a fellowship with Jesus Christ, whose highest end was, that he might act with a new and celestial energy on the human mind. We rejoice to think, that he did not come to monopolise this divine sway, to enjoy a solitary grandeur, but to receive others, even all who should obey his religion, into the partnership of this honour and happiness. Every Christian, in proportion to his progress, acquires a measure of this divine agency. In the humblest conditions, a power goes forth from a devout and disinterested spirit, calling forth silently moral and religious sentiment, perhaps in a child, or some other friend, and teaching, without the aid of words, the loveliness and peace of sincere and single-hearted virtue. In the more enlightened classes, individuals now and then rise up, who, through a singular force and elevation of soul, obtain a sway over men's minds to which no limit can be prescribed. They speak with a voice which is heard by distant nations, and which goes down to future ages. Their names are repeated with veneration by millions; and millions read in their lives and writings a quickening testimony to the greatness of the mind, to its moral strength, to the reality of disinterested virtue. These are the true sovereigns of the earth. They share in the royalty of Jesus Christ. They have a greatness which will be more and more felt. The time is coming, its signs are visible, when this long mistaken attribute of greatness, will be seen to belong eminently, if not exclusively, to those,

who, by their characters, deeds, sufferings, writings, leave imperishable and ennobling traces of themselves on the human mind. Among these legitimate sovereigns of the world, will be ranked the philosopher, who penetrates the secrets of the universe, and of the soul; who opens new fields to the intellect; who gives it a new consciousness of its own powers, rights, and divine original; who spreads enlarged and liberal habits of thought; and who helps men to understand, that an ever-growing knowledge is the patrimony destined for them by the "Father of their spirits." Among them will be ranked the statesman, who, escaping a vulgar policy, rises to the discovery of the true interest of a state; who seeks without fear or favour the common good; who understands that a nation's mind is more valuable than its soil; who inspirits a people's enterprise, without making them the slaves of wealth; who is mainly anxious to originate or give stability to institutions by which society may be carried forward; who confides with sublime constancy in justice and virtue, as the only foundation of a wise policy and of public prosperity; and above all, who has so drunk into the spirit of Christ and of God, as never to forget, that his particular country is a member of the great human family, bound to all nations by a common nature, by a common interest, and by indissoluble laws of equity and charity. Among these will be ranked, perhaps on the highest throne, the moral and religious Reformer, who truly merits that name; who rises above his times; who is moved by a holy impulse to assail vicious establishments, sustained by fierce passions and inveterate prejudices; who rescues great truths from the corruptions of ages; who, joining calm and deep thought to profound feeling, secures to religion at once enlightened and earnest conviction; who unfolds to men higher forms of virtue than they have yet attained or conceived; who gives brighter and more thrilling views of the perfection for which they were framed, and inspires a victorious faith in the perpetual progress of our nature.

There is one characteristic of this power which belongs to truly great minds, particularly deserving notice.

Far from enslaving, it makes more and more free, those on whom it is exercised; and in this respect it differs wholly from the vulgar sway which ambition thirsts for. It awakens a kindred power in others, calls their faculties into new life, and particularly strengthens them to follow their own deliberate convictions of truth and duty. It breathes conscious energy, self-respect, moral independence, and a scorn of every foreign yoke.

There is another power over men, very different from this; a power, not to quicken and elevate, but to crush and subdue; a power which robs men of the free use of their nature, takes them out of their own hands, and compels them to bend to another's will. This is the sway which men grasp at most eagerly, and which it is our great purpose to expose. To reign, to give laws, to clothe their own wills with omnipotence, to annihilate all other wills, to spoil the individual of that self-direction which is his most precious right—this has ever been deemed by multitudes the highest prize for competition and conflict. The most envied men are those, who have succeeded in prostrating multitudes, in subjecting whole communities, to their single will. It is the love of this power, in all its forms, which we are anxious to hold up to reprobation. If any crime should be placed by society beyond pardon, it is this.

This power has been exerted most conspicuously and perniciously by two classes of men; the priest or minister of religion, and the civil ruler. Both rely on the same instrument; that is, pain or terror; the first, calling to his aid the fires and torments of the future world, and practising on the natural dread of invisible powers; and the latter, availing himself of chains, dungeons, and gibbets in the present life. Through these terrible applications, man has in all ages and in almost every country, been made, in a greater or less degree, a slave and machine; been shackled in all his faculties, and degraded into a tool of others' wills and passions. The influence of almost every political and religious institution, has been to make man abject in mind, fearful, servile, a mechanical repeater of opinions which he dares not try, and a contributor of his toil, sweat, and blood,

› governments which never dreamed of the general 'eal as their only legitimate end. On the immense ıajority of men, thus wronged and enslaved, the con- ciousness of their own nature has not yet dawned; nd the doctrine, that each has a mind, worth more han the material world, and framed to grow forever by self-forming, self-directing energy, is still a secret, a ıystery, notwithstanding the clear annunciation of it, ges ago, by Jesus Christ. We know not a stronger roof of the intenseness and nefariousness of the love f power, than the fact of its having virtually abrogated 'hristianity, and even turned into an engine of do- ıinion, a revelation which breathes throughout the pirit of freedom, proclaims the essential equality of the uman race, and directs its most solemn denunciations gainst the passion for rule and empire.

That this power, which consists in force and com- ulsion, in the imposition on the many of the will nd judgment of one or a few, is of a low order, when ompared with the quickening influence over others, f which we have before spoken, we need not stop to rove. But the remark is less obvious, though not less rue, that it is not only inferior in kind, but in amount r degree. This may not be so easily acknowledged. Ie whose will is passively obeyed by a nation, or 'hose creed is implicitly adopted by a spreading sect, ıay not easily believe, that his power is exceeded, not nly in kind or quality, but in extent, by him who ields only the silent, subtile influence of moral and ıtellectual gifts. But the superiority of moral to arbi- rary sway in this particular, is proved by its effects. Ioral power is creative; arbitrary power wastes away he spirit and force of those on whom it is exerted. And is it not a mightier work to create than to destroy? A higher energy is required to quicken than to crush; o elevate than to depress; to warm and expand than o chill and contract. Any hand, even the weakest, nay take away life; another agency is required to indle or restore it. A vulgar incendiary may destroy n an hour a magnificent structure, the labour of ages. Has he energy to be compared with the creative intel-

lect, in which this work had its origin? A fanatic of ordinary talent may send terror through a crowd; and by the craft, which is so often joined with fanaticism, may fasten on multitudes a debasing creed. Has he power to be compared with him, who rescues from darkness one only of these enslaved minds, and quickens it to think justly and nobly in relation to God, duty, and immortality? The energies of a single soul, awakened by such an influence, to the free and full use of its powers, may surpass, in their progress, the intellectual activity of a whole community, enchained and debased by fanaticism or outward force. Arbitrary power, whether civil or religious, if tried by the only fair test, that is, by its effects, seems to have more affinity with weakness than strength. It enfeebles and narrows what it acts upon. Its efficiency resembles that of darkness and cold in the natural world. True power is vivifying, productive, builds up, and gives strength. We have a noble type and manifestation of it in the sun, which calls forth and diffuses motion, life, energy, and beauty. He who succeeds in chaining men's understandings and breaking their wills, may indeed number millions as his subjects. But a weak, puny race are the products of his sway, and they can only reach the stature and force of men by throwing off his yoke. He who, by an intellectual and moral energy, awakens kindred energy in others, touches springs of infinite might, gives impulse to faculties to which no bounds can be prescribed, begins an action which will never end. One great and kindling thought from a retired and obscure man, may live when thrones are fallen, and the memory of those who filled them obliterated, and like an undying fire, may illuminate and quicken all future generations.

We have spoken of the inferiority and worthlessness of that dominion over others, which has been coveted so greedily in all ages. We should rejoice could we convey some just idea of its moral turpitude. Of all injuries and crimes, the most flagrant is chargeable on him who aims to establish dominion over his brethren. He wars with what is more precious than life. He

would rob men of their chief prerogative and glory; we mean of self-dominion, of that empire which is given to a rational and moral being over his own soul and his own life. Such a being is framed to find honour and happiness in forming and swaying himself, in adopting as his supreme standard his convictions of truth and duty, in unfolding his powers by free exertion, in acting from a principle within, from his growing conscience. His proper and noblest attributes are self-government, self-reverence, energy of thought, energy in choosing the right and the good, energy in casting off all other dominion. He was created for empire in his own breast, and wo, wo to them who would pluck from him his sceptre! A mind, inspired by God with reason and conscience, and capable, through these endowments, of progress in truth and duty, is a sacred thing; more sacred than temples made with hands, or even than this outward universe. It is of nobler lineage than that of which human aristocracy makes its boast. It bears the lineaments of a Divine Parent. It has not only a physical, but moral connexion with the Supreme Being. Through its self-determining power, it is accountable for its deeds, and for whatever it becomes. Responsibility, that which above all things makes existence solemn, is laid upon it. Its great end is to conform itself, by its own energy, and by spiritual succours which its own prayers and faithfulness secure, to that perfection of wisdom and goodness, of which God is the original and source, which shines upon us from the whole outward world, but of which the intelligent soul is a truer recipient and a brighter image even than the sun with all his splendours. From these views we learn, that no outrage, no injury, can equal that which is perpetrated by him, who would break down and subjugate the human mind; who would rob men of self-reverence; who would bring them to stand more in awe of outward authority, than of reason and conscience in their own souls; who would make himself a standard and law for his race, and shape, by force or terror, the free spirits of others after his own judgment and will.

All excellence, whether intellectual or moral, in-

volves, as its essential elements, freedom, energy, and moral independence; so that the invader of these, whether from the throne or the pulpit, invades the most sacred interest of the human race. Intellectual excellence implies and requires these. This does not consist in passive assent even to the highest truths; or in the most extensive stores of knowledge acquired by an implicit faith, and lodged in the inert memory. It lies in force, freshness, and independence of thought; and is most conspicuously manifested by him who, loving truth supremely, seeks it resolutely, follows the light without fear, and modifies the views of others by the patient, strenuous exercise of his own faculties. To a man thus intellectually free, truth is not, what it is to passive multitudes, a foreign substance, dormant, lifeless, fruitless; but penetrating, prolific, full of vitality, and ministering to the health and expansion of the soul. And what we have said of intellectual excellence is still more true of moral. This has its foundation and root in freedom, and cannot exist a moment without it. The very idea of virtue is, that it is a free act, the product or result of the mind's self-determining power. It is not good feeling, infused by nature or caught by sympathy; nor is it good conduct into which we have slidden through imitation, or which has been forced upon us by another's will. We ourselves are its authors in a high and peculiar sense. We indeed depend on God for virtue; for our capacity of moral action is wholly his gift and inspiration, and without his perpetual aid this capacity would avail nothing. But his aid is not compulsion. He respects, he cannot violate, that moral freedom which is his richest gift. To the individual, the decision of his own character is left. He has more than kingly power in his own soul. Let him never resign it. Let none dare to interfere with it. Virtue is self-dominion, or, what is the same thing, it is self-subjection to the principle of duty, that highest law in the soul. If these views of intellectual and moral excellence be just, then to invade men's freedom is to aim the deadliest blow at their honour and happiness; and their worst foe is he who fetters their reason, who makes his will

their law, who makes them tools, echoes, copies of himself.

Perhaps it may be objected to the representation of virtue as consisting in self-dominion, that the Scriptures speak of it as consisting in obedience to God. But these are perfectly compatible and harmonious views; for genuine obedience to God is the free choice and adoption of a law, the great principles of which our own minds approve, and our own consciences bind on us; which is not an arbitrary injunction, but an emanation and expression of the Divine Mind; and which is intended throughout to give energy, dignity, and enlargement to our best powers. He, and he only, obeys God virtuously and acceptably, who reverences right, not power; who has chosen rectitude as his supreme rule; who sees and reveres in God the fulness and brightness of moral excellence, and who sees in obedience the progress and perfection of his own nature. That subjection to the Deity, which, we fear, is too common, in which the mind surrenders itself to mere power and will, is anything but virtue. We fear that it is disloyalty to that moral principle, which is ever to be reverenced as God's vicegerent in the rational soul.

Perhaps some may fear, that, in our zeal for the freedom and independence of the individual mind, we unsettle government, and almost imply that it is a wrong. Far from it. We hold government to be an essential means of our intellectual and moral education, and would strengthen it by pointing out its legitimate functions. Government, as far as it is rightful, is the guardian and friend of freedom, so that in exalting the one we enforce the other. The highest aim of all authority is to confer liberty. This is true of domestic rule. The great, we may say the single object of parental government, of a wise and virtuous education, is, to give the child the fullest use of his own powers; to give him inward force; to train him up to govern himself. The same is true of the authority of Jesus Christ. He came, indeed, to rule mankind; but to rule them, not by arbitrary statutes, not by force and menace, not by mere will, but by setting before them, in precept and life,

those everlasting rules of rectitude, which Heaven obeys, and of which every soul contains the living germs. He came to exert a moral power; to reign by the manifestation of celestial virtues; to awaken the energy of holy purpose in the free mind. He came to publish liberty to the captives; to open the prison door; to break the power of the passions; to break the yoke of a ceremonial religion which had been imposed in the childhood of the race; to exalt us to a manly homage and obedience of our Creator. Of civil government, too, the great end is to secure freedom. Its proper, and highest function is, to watch over the liberties of each and all, and to open to a community the widest field for all its powers. Its very chains and prisons have the general freedom for their aim. They are just, only when used to curb oppression and wrong; to disarm him who has a tyrant's heart, if not a tyrant's power, who wars against others' rights, who, by invading property or life, would substitute force for the reign of equal laws. Freedom, we repeat it, is the end of government. To exalt men to self-rule is the end of all other rule, and he who would fasten on them his arbitrary will is their worst foe.

We have aimed to show the guilt of the love of power and dominion, by showing the ruin which it brings on the mind, by enlarging on the preciousness of that inward freedom which it invades and destroys. To us, this view is the most impressive; but the guilt of this passion may also be decerned, and by some more clearly, in its outward influences; in the desolation, bloodshed, and wo, of which it is the perpetual cause. We owe to it almost all the miseries of war. To spread the sway of one or a few, thousands and millions have been turned into machines under the name of soldiers, armed with instruments of destruction, and then sent to reduce others to their own lot by fear and pain, by fire and sword, by butchery and pillage. And is it light guilt, to array man against his brother; to make murder the trade of thousands; to drench the earth with human blood; to turn it into a desert; to scatter families like chaff; to make mothers widows, and children orphans;

and to do all this for the purpose of spreading a still gloomier desolation, for the purpose of subjugating men's souls, turning them into base parasites, extorting from them a degrading homage, humbling them in their own eyes, and breaking them to servility as the chief duty of life? When the passion for power succeeds, as it generally has done, in establishing despotism, it seems to make even civilisation a doubtful good. Whilst the monarch and his court are abandoned to a wasteful luxury, the peasantry, rooted to the soil and doomed to a perpetual round of labours, are raised but little above the brute. There are parts of Europe—Christian Europe—in which the peasant, through whose sweat kings and nobles riot in plenty, seems to enjoy less, on the whole, than the untamed Indian of our forests. Chained to one spot, living on the cheapest vegetables, sometimes unable to buy salt to season his coarse fare, seldom or never tasting animal food, having for his shelter a mud-walled hut floored with earth or stone, and subjected equally with the brute to the rule of a superior, he seems to us to partake less of animal, intellectual, and moral pleasures, than the free wanderer of the woods, whose steps no man fetters; whose wigwam no tyrant violates; whose chief toil is hunting, that noblest of sports; who feasts on the deer, that most luxurious of viands; to whom streams, as well as woods, pay tribute; whose adventurous life gives sagacity; and in whom peril nourishes courage and self-command. We are no advocates for savage life. We know that its boasted freedom is a delusion. The single fact that human nature in this wild state makes no progress, is proof enough that it wants true liberty. We mean only to say that man in the hands of despotism, is sometimes degraded below the savage; that it were better for him to be lawless, than to live under lawless sway.

It is the part of Christians to look on the passion for power and dominion with strong abhorrence; for it is singularly hostile to the genius of their religion. Jesus Christ always condemned it. One of the striking marks of his moral greatness, and of the originality of his character, was, that he held no fellowship and made

no compromise with this universal spirit of his age, but withstood it in every form. He found the Jews intoxicating themselves with dreams of empire. Of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, the most familiar and dear to them, were those which announced him as a conqueror, and which were construed by their worldliness into a promise of triumphs to the people from whom he was to spring. Even the chosen disciples of Jesus looked to him for this good. "To sit on his right hand and on his left," or, in other words, to hold the most commanding stations in his kingdom, was not only their lurking wish, but their open and importunate request. But there was no passion on which Jesus frowned more severely than on this. He taught, that to be great in his kingdom, men must serve, instead of ruling their brethren. He placed among them a child as an emblem of the humility of his religion. His most terrible rebukes fell on the lordly, aspiring Pharisee. In his own person, he was mild and condescending, exacting no personal service, living with his disciples as a friend, sharing their wants, sleeping in their fishing-boat, and even washing their feet; and in all this, he expressly proposed himself to them as a pattern, knowing well, that the last triumph of disinterestedness is to forget our own superiority, in our sympathy, solicitude, tenderness, respect, and self-denying zeal for those who are below us. We cannot indeed wonder that the lust of power should be encountered by the sternest rebukes and menace of Christianity, because it wages open war with the great end of this religion, which is the elevation of the human mind. No corruption of this religion is more palpable and more enormous, than that which turns it into an instrument of dominion, and which makes it teach, that man's primary duty is to give himself a passive material into the hands of his minister, priest, or king.

The subject which we now discuss is one in which all nations have an interest, and especially our own; and we should fail of our main purpose, were we not to lead our readers to apply it to ourselves. The passion for ruling, though most completely developed in despot-

isms, is confined to no forms of government. It is the chief peril of free states, the natural enemy of free institutions. It agitates our own country, and still throws an uncertainty over the great experiment we are making here in behalf of liberty. We will try, then, in a few words, to expose its influences and dangers, and to abate that zeal with which a participation in office and power is sought among ourselves.

It is the distinction of republican institutions, that whilst they compel the passion for power to moderate its pretensions, and to satisfy itself with more limited gratifications, they tend to spread it more widely through the community, and to make it a universal principle. The doors of office being opened to all, crowds burn to rush in. A thousand hands are stretched out to grasp the reins which are denied to none. Perhaps in this boasted and boasting land of liberty, not a few, if called to state the chief good of a republic, would place it in this; that every man is eligible to every office, and that the highest places of power and trust are prizes for universal competition. The superiority attributed by many to our institutions, is, not that they secure the greatest freedom, but give every man a chance of ruling; not that they reduce the power of government within the narrowest limits which the safety of the state admits, but throw it into as many hands as possible. The despot's great crime is thought to be, that he keeps the delight of dominion to himself, that he makes a monopoly of it, whilst our more generous institutions, by breaking it into parcels, and inviting the multitude to scramble for it, spread this joy more widely. The result is, that political ambition infects our country, and generates a feverish restlessness and discontent, which, to the monarchist, may seem more than a balance for our forms of liberty. The spirit of intrigue, which in absolute governments is confined to courts, walks abroad through the land; and as individuals can accomplish no political purposes single-handed, they band themselves into parties, ostensibly framed for public ends, but aiming only at the acquisition of power. The nominal sovereign, that is, the people,

like all other sovereigns, is courted and flattered, and told that it can do no wrong. Its pride is pampered, its passions inflamed, its prejudices made inveterate. Such are the processes, by which other republics have been subverted, and he must be blind who cannot trace them among ourselves. We mean not to exaggerate our dangers. We rejoice to know, that the improvements of society oppose many checks to the love of power. But every wise man, who sees its workings, must dread it as our chief foe.

This passion derives strength and vehemence in our country, from the common idea that political power is the highest prize which society has to offer. We know not a more general delusion, nor is it the least dangerous. Instilled, as it is, in our youth, it gives infinite excitement to political ambition. It turns the active talent of the country to public station as the supreme good, and makes it restless, intriguing, and unprincipled. It calls out hosts of selfish competitors for comparatively few places, and encourages a bold, unblushing pursuit of personal elevation, which a just moral sense and self-respect in the community would frown upon and cover with shame. This prejudice has come down from past ages, and is one of their worst bequests. To govern others has always been thought the highest function on earth. We have a remarkable proof of the strength and pernicious influence of this persuasion, in the manner in which history has been written. Who fill the page of history? Political and military leaders, who have lived for one end, to subdue and govern their fellow-beings. These occupy the foreground, and the people, the human race, dwindle into insignificance, and are almost lost behind their masters. The proper and noblest object of history, is, to record the vicissitudes of society, its spirit in different ages, the causes which have determined its progress and decline, and especially the manifestations and growth of its highest attributes and interests, of intelligence, of the religious principle, of moral sentiment, of the elegant and useful arts, of the triumphs of man over nature and himself. Instead of this, we have records of men in power, often

weak, oftener wicked, who did little or nothing for the advancement of their age, who were in no sense its representatives, whom the accident of birth perhaps raised to influence. We have the quarrels of courtiers, the intrigues of cabinets, sieges and battles, royal births and deaths, and the secrets of a palace, that sink of lewdness and corruption. These are the staples of history. The inventions of printing, of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass, were too mean affairs for history to trace. She was bowing before kings and warriors. She had volumes for the plots and quarrels of Leicester and Essex in the reign of Elizabeth, but not a page for Shakspeare; and if Bacon had not filled an office, she would hardly have recorded his name, in her anxiety to preserve the deeds and sayings of that Solomon of his age, James the First!

We have spoken of the supreme importance which is attached to rulers and government, as a prejudice; and we think that something may be done towards abating the passion for power, by placing this thought in a clearer light. It seems to us not very difficult to show, that to govern men is not so high a sphere of action as has been commonly supposed, and that those who have obtained this dignity, have usurped a place beyond their due in history and men's minds. We apprehend, indeed, that we are not alone in this opinion; that a change of sentiment on this subject has commenced and must go on; that men are learning, that there are higher sources of happiness and more important agents in human affairs than political rule. It is one mark of the progress of society, that it brings down the public man and raises the private one. It throws power into the hands of untitled individuals, and spreads it through all orders of the community. It multiplies and distributes freely means of extensive influence, and opens new channels, by which the gifted mind, in whatever rank or condition, may communicate itself far and wide. Through the diffusion of education and printing, a private man may now speak to multitudes, incomparably more numerous than ancient or modern eloquence ever electrified in the popular assembly or the hall of legis-

lation. By these instruments, truth is asserting her sovereignty over nations, without the help of rank, office, or sword; and her faithful ministers will become more and more the lawgivers of the world.

We mean not to deny, we steadily affirm, that government is a great good, and essential to human happiness; but it does its good chiefly by a negative influence, by repressing injustice and crime, by securing property from invasion, and thus removing obstructions to the free exercise of human powers. It confers little positive benefit. Its office is, not to confer happiness, but to give men opportunity to work out happiness for themselves. Government resembles the wall which surrounds our lands; a needful protection, but rearing no harvests, ripening no fruits. It is the individual who must choose whether the enclosure shall be a paradise or a waste. How little positive good can government confer? It does not till our fields, build our houses, weave the ties which bind us to our families, give disinterestedness to the heart, or energy to the intellect and will. All our great interests are left to ourselves; and governments, when they have interfered with them, have obstructed, much more than advanced them. For example, they have taken religion into their keeping only to disfigure it. So, education, in their hands, has generally become a propagator of servile maxims, and an upholder of antiquated errors. In like manner, they have paralysed trade by their nursing care, and multiplied poverty by expedients for its relief. Government has almost always been a barrier against which intellect has had to struggle; and society has made its chief progress by the minds of private individuals, who have outstripped their rulers, and gradually shamed them into truth and wisdom.

Virtue and intelligence are the great interests of a community, including all others, and worth all others; and the noblest agency is that by which they are advanced. Now we apprehend, that political power is not the most effectual instrument for their promotion; and accordingly, we doubt whether government is the only or highest sphere for superior minds. Virtue, from

s very nature, cannot be a product of what may be alled the direct operation of government; that is, of egislation. Laws may repress crime. Their office is o erect prisons for violence and fraud. But moral and eligious worth, dignity of character, loftiness of senti-ient, all that makes man a blessing to himself and ociety, lies beyond their province. Virtue is of the oul, where laws cannot penetrate. Excellence is some-ing too refined, spiritual, celestial, to be produced by e coarse machinery of government. Human legisla-on addresses itself to self-love, and works by outward rce. Its chief instrument is punishment. It cannot uch the springs of virtuous feelings, of great and good eeds. Accordingly, rulers, with all their imagined om-ipotence, do not dream of enjoining by statute, philan-ropy, gratitude, devout sentiment, magnanimity, and urity of thought. Virtue is too high a concern for overnment. It is an inspiration of God, not a creature law; and the agents whom God chiefly honours in its romotion, are those who, through experience, as well s meditation, have risen to generous conceptions of it, nd who show it forth, not in empty eulogies, but in e language of deep conviction, and in lives of purity.

Government, then, does little to advance the chief in-erest of human nature by its direct agency; and what nall we say of its indirect? Here we wish not to ffend; but we must be allowed to use that plainness of peech which becomes Christians and freemen. We o fear, then, that the indirect influence of government on the whole adverse to virtue; and in saying this, e do not speak of other countries, or of different poli-cal institutions from our own. We do not mean to ay, what all around us would echo, that monarchy cor-upts a state, that the air of a court reeks with infec-on, and taints the higher classes with a licentiousness hich descends to their inferiors. We speak of govern-ent at home; and we ask wise men to say, whether ministers most to vice or virtue. We fear, that here, s elsewhere, political power is of corrupting tendency; nd that, generally speaking, public men are not the ost effectual teachers of truth, disinterestedness, and

incorruptible integrity to the people. An error prevails in relation to political concerns, which necessarily makes civil institutions demoralizing. It is deeply rooted, the growth of ages. We refer to the belief, that public men are absolved in a measure from the everlasting and immutable obligations of morality; that political power is a prize, which justifies arts and compliances that would be scorned in private life; that management, intrigue, hollow pretensions, and appeals to base passions, deserve slight rebuke when employed to compass political ends. Accordingly, the laws of truth, justice, and philanthropy, have seldom been applied to public as to private concerns. Even those individuals, who have come to frown indignantly on the machinations, the office-seeking, and the sacrifices to popularity, which disgrace our internal condition, are disposed to acquiesce in a crooked or ungenerous policy towards foreign nations, by which great advantages may accrue to their own country. Now the great truth on which the cause of virtue rests, is, that rectitude is an eternal, unalterable, and universal law, binding at once heaven and earth, the perfection of God's character, and the harmony and happiness of the rational creation; and in proportion as political institutions unsettle this great conviction—in proportion as they teach, that truth, justice, and philanthropy are local, partial obligations, claiming homage from the weak, but shrinking before the powerful—in proportion as they thus insult the awful and inviolable majesty of the Eternal Law—in the same proportion they undermine the very foundation of a people's virtue.

In regard to the other great interest of the community, its intelligence, government may do much good by a direct influence; that is, by instituting schools or appropriating revenue for the instruction of the poorer classes. Whether it would do wisely in assuming to itself, or in taking from individuals, the provision and care of higher literary institutions, is a question not easily determined. But no one will doubt, that it is a noble function, to assist and develope the intellect in those classes of the community, whose hard condition

exposes them to a merely animal existence. Still the agency of government in regard to knowledge, is necessarily superficial and narrow. The great sources of intellectual power and progress to a people, are its strong and original thinkers, be they found where they may. Government cannot, and does not, extend the bounds of knowledge; cannot make experiments in the laboratory, explore the laws of animal or vegetable nature, or establish the principles of criticism, morals, and religion. The energy which is to carry forward the intellect of a people, belongs chiefly to private individuals, who devote themselves to lonely thought, who worship truth, who originate the views demanded by their age, who help us to throw off the yoke of established prejudices, who improve old modes of education or invent better. It is true that great men at the head of affairs, may, and often do, contribute much to the growth of a nation's mind. But it too often happens that their station obstructs rather than aids their usefulness. Their connexion with a party, and the habit of viewing subjects in reference to personal aggrandizement, too often obscure the noblest intellects, and convert into patrons of narrow views and temporary interests, those, who, in other conditions, would have been the lights of their age, and the propagators of everlasting truth. From these views of the limited influence of government on the most precious interests of society, we learn that political power is not the noblest power, and that, in the progress of intelligence, it will cease to be coveted as the chief and most honourable distinction on earth.

If we pass now to the consideration of that interest, over which government is expected chiefly to watch, and on which it is most competent to act with power, we shall not arrive at a result very different from what we have just expressed. We refer to property, or wealth. That the influence of political institutions on this great concern is important, inestimable, we mean not to deny. But as we have already suggested, it is chiefly negative. Government enriches a people by removing obstructions to their powers, by defending them from wrong, and thus giving them opportunity to

enrich themselves. Government is not the spring of the wealth of nations, but their own sagacity, industry, enterprise, and force of character. To leave a people to themselves, is generally the best service their rulers can render. Time was, when sovereigns fixed prices and wages, regulated industry and expense, and imagined that a nation would starve and perish, if it were not guided and guarded like an infant. But we have learned, that men are their own best guardians, that property is safest under its owner's care, and that generally speaking, even great enterprises can better be accomplished by the voluntary association of individuals, than by the state. Indeed, we are met at every stage of this discussion by the truth, that political power is a weak engine compared with *individual* intelligence, virtue, and effort; and we are the more anxious to enforce this truth, because, through an extravagant estimate of government, men are apt to expect from it what they must do for themselves, and to throw upon it the blame which belongs to their own feebleness and improvidence. The great hope of society, is individual character. Civilisation and political institutions are themselves sources of not a few evils, which nothing but the intellectual and moral energy of the private citizen can avert or relieve. Such, for example, are the monstrous inequalities of property, the sad contrasts of condition, which disfigure a large city; which laws create and cannot remove; which can only be mitigated and diminished by a principle of moral restraint in the poorer classes, and by a wise beneficence in the rich. The great lesson for men to learn, is, that their happiness is in their own hands; that it is to be wrought out by their own faithfulness to God and conscience; that no outward institutions can supply the place of inward principle, of moral energy, whilst this can go far to supply the place of almost every outward aid.

Our remarks will show that our estimate of political institutions, is more moderate than the prevalent one, and that we regard the power, for which ambition has woven so many plots and shed so much blood, as destined to occupy a more and more narrow space, among

the means of usefulness and distinction. There is, however, one branch of government, which we hold in high veneration, which we account an unspeakable blessing, and which, for the world, we would not say a word to disparage; and we are the more disposed to speak of it, because its relative importance seems to us little understood. We refer to the Judiciary, a department worth all others in the state. Whilst politicians expend their zeal on transient interests, which perhaps derive their chief importance from their connexion with a party, it is the province of the Judge to apply those solemn and universal laws of rectitude, on which the security, industry, and prosperity of the individual and the state essentially depend. From his tribunal, as from a sacred oracle, go forth the responses of justice. To us there is nothing in the whole fabric of civil institutions so interesting and imposing, as this impartial and authoritative exposition of the principles of moral legislation. The administration of justice in this country, where the Judge, without a guard, without a soldier, without pomp, decides upon the dearest interests of the citizen, trusting chiefly to the moral sentiment of the community for the execution of his decrees, is the most beautiful and encouraging aspect under which our government can be viewed. We repeat it, there is nothing in public affairs so venerable as the voice of Justice, speaking through her delegated ministers, reaching and subduing the high as well as the low, setting a defence around the splendid mansion of wealth and the lowly hut of poverty, repressing wrong, vindicating innocence, humbling the oppressor, and publishing the rights of human nature to every human being. We confess, that we often turn with pain and humiliation from the hall of Congress where we see the legislator forgetting the majesty of his function, forgetting his relation to a vast and growing community, and sacrificing to his party or to himself the public weal; and it comforts us to turn to the court of justice, where the dispenser of the laws, shutting his ear against all solicitations of friendship or interest, dissolving for a time every private tie, forgetting public opinion, and withstanding

public feeling, asks only what is RIGHT. To our courts, the resorts and refuge of weakness and innocence, we look with hope and joy. We boast, with a virtuous pride, that no breath of corruption has as yet tainted their pure air. To this department of government, we cannot ascribe too much importance. Over this, we cannot watch too jealously. Every encroachment on its independence we should resent, and repel, as the chief wrong our country can sustain. Wo, wo to the impious hand, which would shake this most sacred and precious column of the social edifice.

In the remarks which we have now submitted to our readers, we have treated of great topics, if not worthily, yet, we trust, with a pure purpose. We have aimed to expose the passion for dominion, the desire of ruling mankind. We have laboured to show the superiority of moral power and influence to that sway which has for ages been seized with eager and bloody hands. We have laboured to hold up to unmeasured reprobation, him who would establish an empire of brute force over rational beings. We have laboured to hold forth, as the enemy of his race, the man, who, in any way, would fetter the human mind, and subject other wills to his own. In a word, we have desired to awaken others and ourselves, to a just self-reverence, to the free use and expansion of our highest powers, and expecially to that moral force, that energy of holy, virtuous purpose, without which we are slaves amidst the freest institutions. Better gifts than these we cannot supplicate from God; nor can we consecrate our lives to nobler acquisitions.

REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER & WRITINGS

OF

FENELON.

Selections from the Writings of Fenelon; with an Appendix, containing a Memoir of his Life. By a Lady. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, & Wilkins. 1829.

We perform a very gratifying duty, in introducing and recommending to our readers the book which stands at the head of this article. An attractive and quickening work on practical religion we regard as a valuable accession to our literature. Indeed anything written with power on Christian morals and theology is most welcome. It is too true, and a sad truth, that religious books are pre-eminently dull. If we wished to impoverish a man's intellect, we could devise few means more effectual, than to confine him to what is called a course of theological reading. The very subject, to which, above all others, the writer should bring his whole strength of thought and feeling, which allies itself to our noblest faculties, to which reason, imagination, taste, and genius should consecrate their noblest efforts, is of all subjects treated most weakly, tamely, and with least attraction. Of course there are splendid exceptions, but we speak of the immense majority of theological books. It is wonderful how men can think and write upon religion to so little effect. That a theme so vast, so sublime as Christianity, embracing God and man, earth and heaven, time and eternity, connected intimately with all human history, deriving lights from all human experience, admitting application to the whole

of human life, and proposing as its great end the everlasting progress of the soul—that such a subject should be treated so monotonously as to be proverbially dull, that its professed explorers should be able to plant their footsteps so exactly in the track of their predecessors, that the boundlessness of the field should so seldom tempt an adventurous spirit from the beaten way, is wonderful, and might seem a miracle to a man unacquainted with the vassalage which has broken down the mind in the department of religion. It is true, that those who write on this topic are accustomed to call it sublime; but they make its sublimity cold and barren, like that of mountain-tops wrapped in everlasting snows. We write this, not in severity, but in sorrow of heart; for we despair of any great progress of the human character or of society, until the energies of the mind shall be bent, as they seldom have been, on those most important subjects and interests of the human mind, morals and religion.

As a striking proof of the poverty of religious literature, and of the general barrenness of the intellect when employed in this field, we may refer to the small amount of original and productive thought in the English church since the days of Barrow and Taylor. Could our voice be heard in England, we would ask impartial and gifted men, more familiar with their country's history than ourselves, to solve the problem, how a Protestant Establishment, so munificently endowed with the means of improvement, should have done so little, in so long a period, for Christianity, should have produced so few books to interest the higher order of minds? Let not these remarks be misunderstood, as if we were wanting in respect and gratitude to a church, which, with all its defects, has been the bulwark of Protestantism, which has been illustrated by the piety and virtues of such men as Bishops Wilson, Berkeley, and Heber, and in which have sprung up so many institutions, consecrated to humanity, and to the diffusion of the Christian faith. We mean not to deny it the honour of having fostered talent in various forms and directions. Among the English clergy we find profound and elegant scholars;

we find the names of those giants in ancient learning, Bentley and Parr; and a crowd of proficients in polite literature, of whom Hurd and Jortin are honourable representatives. We speak only of the deficiency of their contributions to moral and religious science. With the exception of Clarke and Butler, we could not easily name any of the Establishment, since the time above specified, who have decidedly carried forward the human intellect. The latter of these is indeed a great name, notwithstanding the alleged obscurities of his style, and worthy to be enrolled among the master spirits of the human race. In regard to commentators, whose function, as commonly executed, holds a second rank in theology, the English church, since the time of Hammond, has produced none of much value, except Bishop Pearce. We presume that she will not lay claim to the heretical Locke, who carried into the interpretation of the Scriptures the same force of thought, as into the philosophy of the mind; or to Whitby, whose strenuous Arminianism, as Orthodoxy would reproachingly say, tapered off into that most suspicious form of Christianity, Unitarianism. We have not yet named two of the most illustrious intellectual chiefs of the church, Warburton and Horsley. Their great powers we most readily own; but Warburton is generally acknowledged to have wasted his mind, and has left no impression of himself in later times; whilst Horsley, though he has given us striking, if not judicious, sermons, in a style of unusual vigour, cannot be said to have communicated, in any respect, a new impulse to thought, and in Biblical criticism, to which he was zealously devoted, he is one of the last authorities on which a sound mind would lean. To Bishops Lowth and Sherlock we cheerfully acknowledge our obligations; and we question whether the latter has even yet received his due praise. We have not forgotten, though we have not named, Tillotson, Secker, and Porteus. They are all worthy of remembrance, especially Secker, the clear and wise expounder of Christian ethics; but they added little or nothing to the stock which they received. It may be thought, that we have not been just to the Establishment, in passing over Paley.

He has our sincere admiration. On one great topic, which indeed has been worthily treated by many of the clergy, we mean that of Christian evidence, he has shed new light. By felicity of arrangement and illustration, he has given an air of novelty to old arguments, whilst he has strengthened his cause by important original proofs. His *Horæ Paulinæ* is one of the few books destined to live. Paley saw what he did see, through an atmosphere of light. He seized on the strong points of his subject with an intuitive sagacity, and has given his clear, bright thoughts, in a style which has made them the property of his readers almost as perfectly as they were his own. In what then did he fail? We have said, that he was characterised by the distinctness of his vision. He was not, we think, equally remarkable for its extent. He was popular, rather than philosophical. He was deficient in that intellectual thirst, which is a chief element of the philosophical spirit. He had no irrepressible desire to sound the depths of his own nature, or to ascend to wide and all-reconciling views of the works and ways of God. Moral philosophy he carried backward; nor had he higher claims in religious, than in ethical science. His sermons are worthy of all praise, not indeed for their power over the heart, but for their plain and strong expositions of duty, and their awakening appeals to the conscience.

We leave this topic with observing, that in the noblest branch of history, we mean Christian or ecclesiastical history, the English church has not furnished a single distinguished name. We have one mournful and decisive proof of this deficiency. The vast majority of English readers learn what they know of the progress and fortunes of their religion, from its foe and insulter, from Gibbon, the apostle of unbelief. The history of Christianity, the most important and sublime theme in this province of literature, has as yet found no writer to do it justice, none to be compared with the great names in civil history. The mightiest revolution in the records of our race remains to be worthily told. We doubt indeed, whether the true character, style, and extent of the work which is needed, are as yet compre-

ıended. That the same rigorous impartiality, the same pirit of philosophical research into causes and effects, s to be carried into religious as into civil history, is imerfectly understood. The records of particular sects ınd churches, instead of exhausting this great subject, ıre perhaps subordinate parts. We want to know the ;reat conflict between Christianity and Heathenism, ınd the action and reaction of these systems on one ınother. We want to know the influences of Christinity on society, politics, manners, philosophy, and litrature, and the modifications which it has received in eturn from all these mighty agents. We know not ;here history can find a nobler field for its graphic ıowers, than in the chivalrous ages of Christianity; nor an it find in its whole range over the past, a subject o fitted, as the spread and fortunes of this religion, to s great end, which is, to throw light on the nature and owers of man, and to carry us deep into the human oul. When is this greatest and most lamentable chasm ı our literature to be supplied?

We have cited the English church as a proof of the nproductiveness of the intellect in religion, and of the arrenness of theological literature. Had we time, we ıight find corroborations in other sects. In truth, a aralysing influence has been working mightily for ages ı the Christian world, and we ought not to wonder at s results. Free action has been denied to the mind, nd freedom is an essential condition of growth and ower. A fettered limb moves slowly and operates ›ebly. The spirit pines away in a prison; and yet to ›ar prison-walls round the mind has been the chief toil f ages. The mischiefs of this intellectual bondage, re as yet, we conceive, but imperfectly known, and eed to be set forth with a new eloquence. If, as we elieve, progress be the supreme law of the soul and ıe very aim of its creation, then no wrong can be ıflicted on it so grievous, as to bind it down everlastıgly to a fixed, unvarying creed, especially if this creed as framed in an age of darkness, crime, and political ıd religious strife. This tyranny is pre-eminently treaın against human nature. If growth be the supreme

law and purpose of the mind, then the very truth which was suited to one age, may, if made the limit of future ones, become a positive evil; just as the garment in which childhood sports with ease and joy, would irritate and deform the enlarging frame. God, having framed the soul for expansion, has placed it in the midst of an unlimited universe to receive fresh impulses and impressions without end; and man, "dressed in a little brief authority," would sever it from this sublime connexion, and would shape it after his own ignorance or narrow views. The effects are as necessary as they are mournful. The mind, in proportion as it is cut off from free communication with nature, with revelation, with God, with itself, loses its life, just as the body droops when debarred from the fresh air and the cheering light of heaven. Its vision is contracted, its energies blighted, its movement constrained. It finds health only in action. It is perfect, only in as far as it is self-formed. Let us not be misapprehended. We mean not to deny that the mind needs the aid of human instruction, from the cradle to the grave; but this it needs as a material to act upon, and not as a lesson to be mechanically learned. The great aim of instruction should be to give the mind the consciousness and free use of its own powers. The less of instruction the better, if it only propose to engender a slavish dependence and an inert faith. The soul often owes its best acquisitions to itself. They come to it from glimpses of its own nature which it cannot trace to human teaching, from the whispers of a divine voice, from stirrings and aspirations of its own unfolding and unbounded energies, from the indistinct dawning of new truths, or from the sudden brightening of old truths, which, if left to act freely, work a mighty revolution within. Against these inspirations, if so they may be called, which belong to the individual, and which are perpetually bursting the limits of received ideas, the spirit of religious tyranny wages its chief and most unrelenting war. It dreads nothing so much, as a mind in which these diviner motions manifest themselves in power. That it should have so succeeded in checking and stifling them, is one of the very mournful reflections

›rced on us by human history. We have here one great ause of the sterility of theological literature. Religion, y being imposed as a yoke, has subdued the faculties hich it was meant to quicken; and, what is most wor- hy of remark, like all other yokes, it has often excited mad resistance, which has sought compensation for ast restraints in licentiousness, and disgraced the holy ame of freedom, by attaching it to impiety and shame- ess excess.

A great subject has led us far from our author. We eturn to him with pleasure. We welcome, as we have aid, a book from Fenelon; and we do so because, if ot a profound, he was an original thinker, and because, ough a Catholic, he was essentially free. He wrote om his own mind, and seldom has a purer mind taber- acled in flesh. He professed to believe in an infallible hurch; but he listened habitually to the voice of God ithin him, and speaks of this in language so strong, s to have given the Quakers some plea for ranking him mong themselves. So little did he confine himself to stablished notions, that he drew upon himself the cen- ures of his church, and, like some other Christians hom we could name, has ever been charged with a efined Deism. His works have the great charm of oming fresh from the soul. He wrote from experience, nd hence, though he often speaks a language which ust seem almost a foreign one to men of the world, et he always speaks in a tone of reality. That he has xcesses, we mean not to deny; but they are of a kind hich we regard with more than indulgence, almost ith admiration. Common fanaticism we cannot away ith; for it is essentially vulgar, the working of animal assions, sometimes of sexual love, and oftener of earthly mbition. But when a pure mind errs, by aspiring after disinterestedness and purity not granted to our present ifant state, we almost reverence its errors; and still ore, we recognise in them an essential truth. They ly anticipate and claim too speedily the good for hich man was made. They are the misapprehensions f the inspired prophet, who hopes to see in his own ay, what he was appointed to promise to remoter ages.

Fenelon saw far into the human heart, and especially into the lurkings of self-love. He looked with a piercing eye through the disguises of sin. But he knew sin, not, as most men do, by bitter experience of its power, so much as by his knowledge and experience of virtue. Deformity was revealed to him by his refined perceptions and intense love of moral beauty. The light, which he carried with him into the dark corners of the human heart, and by which he laid open its most hidden guilt, was that of celestial goodness. Hence, though the severest of censors, he is the most pitying. Not a tone of asperity escapes him. He looks on human error with an angel's tenderness, with tears which an angel might shed, and thus reconciles and binds us to our race, at the very moment of revealing its corruptions.

That Fenelon's views of human nature were dark, too dark, we learn from almost every page of his writings; and at this we cannot wonder. He was early thrown into the very court, from which Rochefoucauld drew his celebrated Maxims, perhaps the spot, above all others on the face of the earth, distinguished and disgraced by selfishness, hypocrisy, and intrigue. When we think of Fenelon in the palace of Louis XIV. it reminds us of a seraph sent on a divine commission into the abodes of the lost; and when we recollect that in that atmosphere he composed his Telemachus, we doubt whether the records of the world furnish stronger evidence of the power of a divine virtue, to turn temptation into glory and strength, and to make even crowned and prosperous vice a means of triumph and exaltation. Another cause of Fenelon's unjust views of human life, may be found, we think, in his profession. All professions tend to narrow and obscure the intellect, and none more than that of a priest. We know not indeed a nobler or more useful function, than that of the Christian minister; but superstitious notions and an imagined sanctity, have severed him more or less from his race, especially in a church which dooms him to celibacy, and from this unnatural, insulated position, it is impossible for him to judge justly of his kind. We think, too, that Fenelon was led astray by a very common error of exalted minds.

le applied too rigorous and unvarying a standard to ıe multitude. He leaned to the error of expecting the :rength of manhood in the child, the harvest in seed-me. On this subject, above all others, we feel that 'e should speak cautiously. We know that there is a ›nity towards human deficiencies full of danger; but ıere is, too, a severity far more common, and perhaps ıore ruinous. Human nature, as ordinarily exhibited, ıerits rebuke; but whoever considers the sore trials, ıe thick darkness, the impetuous will, the strong pas-.ons, under which man commences his moral probation, ill temper rebuke with pity and hope. There is a wis-ɔm, perhaps the rarest and sublimest attainment of the ıtellect, which is at once liberal and severe, indulgent ıd unbending; which makes merciful and equitable lowance for the innocent infirmities, the necessary rors, the obstructions and temptations of human be-gs, and at the same time asserts the majesty of virtue, rengthens the sense of accountableness, binds on us ılf-denial, and points upward, with a never-ceasing ıportunity, to moral perfection as the great aim and ıly happiness of the human soul. We will not say that enelon was a stranger to this broad, comprehensive isdom, but we cannot name it as his chief distinction.

We have said that we welcome the book under con-deration, because it came from so pure and gifted a .ind. We add, that we do not welcome it the less ır coming from a Catholic. Perhaps we prize it the ıore; for we wish that Protestantism may grow wiser ıd more tolerant, and we know not a better teacher ' these lessons than the character of Fenelon. Such a an is enough to place within the pale of our charity, ıe whole body to which he belonged. His virtue is :oad enough to shield his whole church from that un-.easured, undistinguishing reprobation, with which Pro-ıstant zeal has too often assailed it. Whoever remem-ɜrs, that the Catholic communion numbers in its ranks .ore than one hundred millions of souls, probably more ıan all other Christian churches together, must shudder : the sentence of proscription, which has sometimes ɜen passed on this immense portion of human beings.

It is time that greater justice were done to this ancient and wide-spread community. The Catholic church has produced some of the greatest and best men that ever lived; and this is proof enough of its possessing all the means of salvation. Who, that hears the tone of contempt in which it is sometimes named, would suspect that Charlemagne, Alfred, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Tasso, Bossuet, Pascal, Des Cartes, were Catholics? Some of the greatest names in arts and arms, on the throne and in the pulpit, were worn by Catholics. To come down to our own times, has not the metropolis of New England witnessed a sublime example of Christian virtue in a Catholic bishop? Who, among our religious teachers, would solicit a comparison between himself and the devoted Cheverus? This good man, whose virtues and talents have now raised him to high dignities in church and state, who now wears in his own country the joint honours of an archbishop and a peer, lived in the midst of us, devoting his days and nights, and his whole heart, to the service of a poor and uneducated congregation. We saw him declining, in a great degree, the society of the cultivated and refined, that he might be the friend of the ignorant and friendless; leaving the circles of polished life, which he would have graced, for the meanest hovels; bearing, with a father's sympathy, the burdens and sorrows of his large spiritual family; charging himself alike with their temporal and spiritual concerns; and never discovering, by the faintest indication, that he felt his fine mind degraded by his seemingly humble office. This good man, bent on his errands of mercy, was seen in our streets under the most burning sun of summer, and the fiercest storms of winter, as if armed against the elements by the power of charity. He has left us, but not to be forgotten. He enjoys among us what to such a man must be dearer than fame. His name is cherished where the great of this world are unknown. It is pronounced with blessings, with grateful tears, with sighs for his return, in many an abode of sorrow and want; and how can we shut our hearts against this proof of the power of the Catholic religion to form good and great men?

These remarks, we trust, will not be perverted. None will suspect us of Catholic partialities. Of all Protestants, we have fewest sympathies with the Romish church. We go farther than our brethren, in rejecting her mysteries, those monuments of human weakness; and as to her claims to infallibility, we repel them with an indignation not to be understood by sects, which, calling themselves Protestant, renounce in words, but assert in practice, a Popish immunity from error, a Popish control over the faith of their brethren. To us, the spiritual tyranny of Popery is as detestable as oriental despotism. When we look back on the history of Papal Rome, we see her, in the days of her power, stained with the blood of martyrs, gorged with rapine, drunk with luxury and crime. But what then? Is it righteous to involve a whole church in guilt, which, after all, belongs to a powerful few? Is it righteous to forget, that Protestantism too has blood on her robes? Is it righteous to forget, that Time, the greatest of reformers, has exerted his silent, purifying power on the Catholic as well as on ourselves? Shall we refuse to see, and to own with joy, that Christianity, even under Papal corruptions, puts forth a divine power? that men cannot wholly spoil it of its celestial efficacy? that, even under its most disastrous eclipse, it still sheds beams to guide the soul to heaven? that there exists in human nature, when loyal to conscience, a power to neutralise error, and to select and incorporate with itself what is pure and ennobling in the most incongruous system? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that among the clergy of the Romish church, have risen up illustrious imitators of that magnanimous Apostle before whom Felix trembled; men who, in the presence of nobles and kings, have bowed to God alone, have challenged for his law uncompromising homage, and rebuked in virtue's own undaunted tone triumphant guilt? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that from the bosom of this corrupt church, have gone forth missionaries to the east and the west, whose toils and martyrdom will not be dimmed by comparison with what is most splendid in Protestant self-sacrifice? We repeat it, not boastingly, but from deep conviction, that

we are exceeded by no sect in earnestness of desire for the subversion of the usurped power of the Catholic church, of its false doctrines, and of its childish ceremonies so often substituted for inward virtue. We believe that these have wrought, and still work great evil. Still we see, and delight to see, among those who adhere to them, the best attributes of men and Christians. Still we are accustomed to refresh our piety by books which Catholics have written. Still we find one of our highest gratifications in those works of art, in which Catholic genius has embodied its sublime and touching conceptions of the form and countenance of Jesus, has made us awed witnesses of his miracles and cross, companions of his apostles, and admirers, with a tender reverence, of the meek celestial beauty of his sainted mother. With these impressions, and this experience, we cannot but lift up our voices against Protestant as well as Papal intolerance. We would purify Protestantism from the worst stain and crime of Rome, her cruel bigotry, her nefarious spirit of exclusion.

It would give us pleasure to enlarge on the character of Fenelon, had we not proposed to ourselves another and still more important object in this review. But, in truth, this grateful duty has been so faithfully performed in the Memoir added to the Selections, that our readers will have no cause to complain of our declining it. This sketch of Fenelon overflows with fervent yet discriminating admiration, and gives utterance to affectionate reverence, with a calmness which wins our confidence. It is not easy to make extracts where the whole is so interesting. But as some of our readers may know Fenelon only by name, and as we wish all to know and love him, we insert a few passages.

"Fenelon, by mixing with all ranks and conditions, by associating with the unfortunate and the sorrowful, by assisting the weak, and by that union of mildness, of energy, and of benevolence, which adapts itself to every character, and to every situation, acquired the knowledge of the moral and physical ills which afflict human nature. It was by this habitual and immediate communication with all classes of society, that he obtained the melancholy conviction of the miseries which distress the greater part of mankind; and to the profound im-

on of this truth through his whole life, we must ascribe
ender commiseration for the unfortunate, which he mani-
in all his writings, and which he displayed still more
fully in all his actions."—*p.* 263, 264.

n the course of his walks, he would often join the peasants,
wn with them on the grass, talk with them, and console
He visited them in their cottages, seated himself at
with them, and partook of their humble meals. By such
ess and familiarity, he won their affections, and gained
to their minds. As they loved him as a father and friend,
elighted to listen to his instructions, and to submit to his
ce. Long after his death, the old people who had the
ess of seeing him on these occasions, spoke of him with
ost tender reverence. 'There,' they would say, 'is the
on which our good Archbishop used to sit in the midst of
e shall see him no more,' and then their tears would

he diocese of Cambrai was often the theatre of war, and
enced the cruel ravages of retreating and conquering ar-
But an extraordinary respect was paid to Fenelon by the
rs of France. The English, the Germans, and the Dutch,
d the inhabitants of Cambrai in their veneration for the
ishop. All distinctions of religion and sect, all feelings
red and jealousy that divided the nations, seemed to dis-
r in the presence of Fenelon. Military escorts were
l him, for his personal security, but these he declined,
aversed the countries desolated by war, to visit his flock,
g in the protection of God. In these visits, his way was
d by alms and benefactions. While he was among them,
ople seemed to enjoy peace in the midst of war.

e brought together into his palace, the wretched in-
nts of the country whom the war had driven from their
, and took care of them, and fed them at his own table.
g one day that one of these peasants ate nothing, he
him the reason of his abstinence. 'Alas! my lord,'
he poor man, 'in making my escape from my cottage, I
ot time to bring off my cow, which was the support of
nily. The enemy will drive her away, and I shall never
nother so good.' Fenelon, availing himself of his privi-
of safe conduct, immediately set out accompanied by a
servant, and drove the cow back himself to the peasant.
This,' said Cardinal Maury, 'is perhaps the finest act of
on's life.' He adds, 'Alas! for the man who reads it
ut being affected.' Another anecdote, showing his ten-
ss to the poor, is thus related of him. A literary man,
library was destroyed by fire, has been deservedly ad-
for saying, 'I should have profited but little by my
, if they had not taught me how to bear the loss of them.'
emark of Fenelon, who lost his in a similar way, is still

more simple and touching. 'I would much rather they were burned, than the cottage of a poor peasant.'

"The virtues of Fenelon give his history the air of romance; but his name will never die. Transports of joy were heard at Cambrai when his ashes were discovered, which, it was thought, had been scattered by the tempest of the Revolution; and to this moment the Flemings call him 'The Good Archbishop.'"—*p.* 274, 275.

The Memoir closes in this touching strain;—

"When we speak of the death of Fenelon, we realise the truth of what we all acknowledge, though few feel, that the good man never dies; that, to use the words of one of our eloquent divines, 'death was but a circumstance in his being.' We may say, as we read his writings, that we are conscious of his immortality; he is with us; his spirit is around us; it enters into and takes possession of our souls. He is at this time, as he was when living in his diocese, the familiar friend of the poor and the sorrowful, the bold reprover of vice, and the gentle guide of the wanderer; he still says to all, in the words of his Divine Master, 'Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"In the houses of the unlearned, where the names of Louis the Fourteenth and Bossuet have never entered, except as connected with Fenelon's, where not a word of his native tongue would be understood, his spirit has entered as a minister of love and wisdom, and a well-worn translation of his Reflections, with a short Memoir of his life, is laid upon the precious Word of God. What has thus immortalised Fenelon? For what is he thus cherished in our hearts? Is it his learning? his celebrity? his eloquence? No. It is the spirit of Christian love, the spirit of the Saviour of mankind, that is poured forth from all his writings; of that love that conquers self, that binds us to our neighbour, that raises us to God. This is Fenelon's power, it is this that touches our souls. We feel that he has entered into the full meaning of that sublime passage in St. John, and made it the motto of his life: 'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.'"—*p.* 282, 283.

The translator has received and will receive the thanks of many readers for giving them an opportunity of holding communion with the mind of Fenelon. Her selections are judicious, and she has caught much of that simplicity which is the charm of Fenelon's style. A want of coherence in the thoughts may sometimes be observed; and this, we suppose, is to be ascribed in part to the author, whose writings seem to be natural

breathings of the soul, rather than elaborate works of art; but still more to the translator, whose delicate task of selecting only what would suit and edify the Protestant mind, must have compelled her to make omissions and sudden transitions, not very favourable to order and connexion.

We now come to our principal object. We propose to examine the most distinguishing views, or system of Fenelon. We say, his "system," for though he seems to write from immediate impulse, his works possess that unity which belongs to the productions of all superior minds. However he may appear to give his thoughts without elaboration or method, yet one spirit pervades them. We hear everywhere the same mild and penetrating voice, and feel ourselves always in the presence of the same strongly marked mind. What, then, were Fenelon's most characteristic views? It may be well to observe, that our principal aim in this inquiry, is, to secure our readers against what we deem exceptionable in his system. We believe, as we have said, that he is not free from excess. He is sometimes unguarded, sometimes extravagant. He needs to be read with caution, as do all who write from their own deeply excited minds. He needs to be received with deductions and explanations, and to furnish these is our present aim. We fear that the very excellences of Fenelon may shield his errors. Admiration prepares the mind for belief; and the moral and religious sensibility of the reader may lay him open to impressions, which, whilst they leave his purity unstained, may engender causeless solicitudes, and repress a just and cheerful interest in the ordinary pleasures and labours of life.

What, then, are Fenelon's characteristic views?—We begin with his views of God, which very much determine and colour a religious system; and these are simple and affecting. He seems to regard God but in one light, to think of him but in one character. God always comes to him as the father, as the pitying and purifying friend of the soul. This spiritual relation of the Supreme Being, is, in the book before us, his

all-comprehending, all-absorbing attribute. Our author constantly sets before us God as dwelling in the human mind, and dwelling there, to reprove its guilt, to speak to it with a still voice, to kindle a celestial ray in its darkness, to distil upon it his grace, to call forth its love towards himself, and to bow it by a gentle, rational sway, to chosen, cheerful, entire subjection to his pure and righteous will. Fenelon had fully received the Christian doctrine of God. He believed in him as the Universal Father, as loving every soul, loving the guiltiest soul, and striving with it to reclaim it to himself. This interest of the Creator in the lost and darkened mind, is the thought which predominates in the writings of this excellent man. God's care of the outward world, of men's outward interests, of the concerns of nations, seems scarcely to enter his mind. It is of God, present to the soul, as a reprover, enlightener, purifier, and guide to perfection, that he loves to speak, and he speaks with a depth of conviction and tenderness, to which, one would think, every reader must respond.

We have seen the predominant view of the Supreme Being in the writings which we are examining:—He is a spiritual father, seeking the perfection of every soul which he has made. Another great question, carrying us still more deeply into Fenelon's mind, now presents itself. In what did he suppose this perfection of the human soul to consist? His views on this subject may be expressed in two words, self-crucifixion and love to God. Through these human perfection is to be sought. In these, and especially in the last, it consists. According to Fenelon, we are placed between two mighty attractions, self and God; and the only important question for every human being, is, to which of these hostile powers he will determine or surrender his mind? His phraseology on this subject is various, and indeed his writings are, in a great measure, expansions of this single view. He lays open the perpetual collisions between the principle of selfishness and the principle of religious love, and calls us with his whole strength of persuasion, to sacrifice the first, to cherish and enthrone

ıe last. This is his great aim. This he urges in a iversity of forms, some of which may be repeated, as elps to a better apprehension of his doctrine. Thus, e calls us "to die to ourselves, and to live to God;"— to renounce our own wills, and to choose the will of ɔod as our only rule;"—"to renounce our own glory, nd to seek the glory of God;"—"to distrust ourselves, nd to put our whole trust in God;"—"to forget ourɜlves, and to give our thoughts to God;"—"to renounce ase, and to labour for God;"—"to sacrifice pleasure, nd to suffer for God;"—"to silence our own passions, nd to listen to the voice of God;"—"to crucify self-love, nd to substitute for it the love of God;"—"to surrender ur plans, and to leave all things to God." These pasıges give us Fenelon's theory of perfection. Self, as e teaches, is the great barrier between the soul and its Iaker, and self is to vanish more and more from our ıoughts, desires, hopes, trust, and complacency, and ɔod to become all in all. Our own interests, pleasures, lans, advancement, all are to be swallowed up in an ntire and unreserved devotion to the will of God.

Such is the doctrine of Fenelon, and it is essentially ıst. Self-crucifixion or self-sacrifice, and love to God, ıcluding love to his creatures, are the chief elements f moral perfection. The pure and noble mind of Fenlon recognised as by instinct, and separated from all ıferior adjuncts, these essential constituents or attriutes of Christian virtue; and there are passages in hich he sets before us their deep and silent workings ı the heart, and their beautiful manifestations in the fe, with a delicacy, power, and truth, which can hardly e surpassed.

Still we think that Fenelon's exposition of his views ı open to objection. We think that his phraseology, otwithstanding its apparent simplicity, is often obscure; ıat he has not set the due bounds to his doctrines; and specially, that refined minds, thirsting for perfection, ıay be led astray by his peculiar mode of exhibiting it.)ur objections we will now state more fully.

We have said that self-crucifixion and love to God, re, in Fenelon's system, the two chief constituents or

elements of virtue and perfection. To these we will give separate attention, although in truth they often coalesce, and always imply one another. We begin with self-crucifixion, or what is often called self-sacrifice, and on this we chiefly differ from the expositions of our author. Perhaps the word *self* occurs more frequently than any other in Fenelon's writings, and he is particularly inclined to place it in contrast with, and in opposition to, God. According to his common teaching, God and self are hostile influences, having nothing in common: the one, the concentration of all evil; the other, of all good. Self is the principle and the seat of all guilt and misery. He is never weary of pouring reproach on self, and, generally speaking, sets no limits to the duty of putting it to a painful death. Now, language like this has led men to very injurious modes of regarding themselves and their own nature, and made them forgetful of what they owe to themselves. It has thrown a cloud over man's condition and prospects. It has led to self-contempt, a vice as pernicious as pride. A man, when told perpetually to crucify *himself*, is apt to include under this word his whole nature, and we fear that, under this teaching, our nature is repressed, its growth stinted, its free movements chained, and of course its beauty, grace, and power impaired. We mean not to charge on Fenelon the error of which we have spoken, or to hold him responsible for its effects. But we do think that it finds shelter under his phraseology, and we deem it so great, so pernicious, as to need a faithful exposition. Men err in nothing more than in disparaging and wronging their own nature. None are just to themselves. The truth on this great subject is indeed so obscured, that it may startle as a paradox. A human being, justly viewed, instead of being bound to general self-crucifixion, cannot reverence and cherish himself too much. This position, we know, is strong. But strong language is needed to encounter strong delusion. We would teach, that great limitations must be set to the duty of renouncing or denying ourselves, and that no self-crucifixion is virtuous, but that which concurs with, and promotes self-respect. We

will unfold our meaning, beginning with positions which we presume will be controverted by none.

If we first regard man's highest nature, we shall see at once, that to crucify or renounce this, so far from being a duty, would be a crime. The mind, which is our chief distinction, can never be spoken or thought of too reverently. It is God's highest work, his mirror and representative. Its superiority to the outward universe is mournfully overlooked, and is yet most true. This pre-eminence we ascribe to the mind, not merely because it can comprehend the universe which cannot comprehend itself, but for still higher reasons. We believe that the human mind is akin to that intellectual energy which gave birth to nature, and consequently that it contains within itself the seminal and prolific principles from which nature sprung. We believe, too, that the highest purpose of the universe is to furnish materials, scope, and excitements to the mind, in the work of assimilating itself to the Infinite Spirit; that is, to minister to a progress within us, which nothing without us can rival. So transcendant is the mind. No praise can equal God's goodness in creating us after his own spiritual likeness. No imagination can conceive of the greatness of the gift of a rational and moral existence. Far from crucifying this, to unfold it must ever be the chief duty and end of our being, and the noblest tribute we can render to its Author.

We have spoken of the mind, that highest part of ourselves, and of the guilt we should incur by crucifying or renouncing it. But the duty of self-crucifixion requires still greater limitations. Taking human nature as consisting of a body as well as mind, as including animal desire, as framed to receive pleasure through the eye and ear and all the organs of sense, in this larger view, we cannot give it up to the immolation which is sometimes urged. We see in the mixed constitution of man a beautiful whole. We see in the lowest as well as highest capacity an important use; and in every sense an inlet of pleasure not to be disdained. Still more, we believe, that he, in whom the physical nature is unfolded most entirely and harmoniously, who unites to

greatest strength of limbs the greatest acuteness of the senses, may, if he will, derive important aids to the intellect and moral powers from these felicities of his outward frame. We believe, too, that by a beautiful reaction, the mind, in proportion to its culture and moral elevation, gives vigour and grace to the body, and enlarges its sphere of action and enjoyment. Thus, human nature, viewed as a whole, as a union of the worlds of matter and mind, is a work worthy of a divine author, and its universal developement, not its general crucifixion, is the lesson of wisdom and virtue.

We go still farther. The desire of our own individual interest, pleasure, good, the principle which is ordinarily denominated self-love or self-regard, is not to be warred against and destroyed. The tendency of this to excess is indeed our chief moral danger. Self-partiality, in some form or other, enters into and constitutes chiefly, if not wholly, every sin. But excess is not essential to self-regard, and this principle of our nature is the last which could be spared. Nothing is plainer than that to every being his own welfare is more specially committed than that of any other, and that a special sensibility to it is imperiously demanded by his present state. He alone knows his own wants and perils, and the hourly, perpetual claims of his particular lot; and were he to discard the care of himself for a day, he would inevitably perish. It is a remark of great importance, that the moral danger to which we are exposed by self-love, arises from the very indispensableness of this principle, from the necessity of its perpetual exercise; for according to a known law of the mind, every passion, unless carefully restrained, gains strength by frequency of excitement and action. The tendency of self-love to excess results from its very importance, or from the need in which we stand of its unceasing agency, and is therefore no reason for its extermination, and no reproach on human nature. This tendency, however, does exist. It is strong. It is fearful. It is our chief peril. It is the precipice, on the edge of which we always tread. It is the great appointed trial of our moral nature. To this tendency, unresisted, tamely obeyed, we owe the

chief guilt and misery of the present state, the extinction of charity, a moral death more terrible than all the calamities of life. This truth Fenelon felt and taught as few have done, and in his powerful warnings against this peril the chief value of his writings lies. He treats with admirable acuteness the windings of self-partiality, shows how it mixes with the best motives, and how it feeds upon, and so consumes our very virtues. All this is true. Still, self-love is an essential part of our nature, and must not and cannot be renounced.

The strong tendency of this principle to excess, of which we have now spoken, explains the strong language in which Fenelon and others have pointed out our danger from this part of our constitution. But it has also given rise to exaggerated views and modes of expression, which have contributed, perhaps, as much as any cause, to the universal want of a just self-respect. Self-love, from its proneness to excess and its constant movements, has naturally been the object of greater attention than any other principle of action; and men, regarding it not so much in its ordinary operations as in its encroachments and its triumphs over other sentiments, have come to consider it as the chief constituent of human nature. Philosophers, "falsely so called," have laboured to resolve into it all our affections, to make it the sole spring of life, so that the whole mind, according to their doctrine, may be considered as one energy of self-love. If to these remarks we add, that this principle, as its name imports, has self or the individual for its object, we have the explanation of a very important fact in the present discussion. We learn how it is, that self-love has come to be called by the name of *self*, as if it constituted the whole individual, and to be considered as entering into and forming human nature as no other principle does. A man's self-love, especially when unrestrained, is thus thought to be and is spoken of as himself; and hence the duty of crucifying or renouncing himself, has naturally been urged by Fenelon and a host of writers, in the broadest and most unqualified terms.

Now, it is not true that self-love is our only principle,

or that it constitutes ourselves any more than other principles, and the wrong done to our nature by such modes of speech needs to be resisted. Our nature has other elements or constituents, and vastly higher ones, to which self-love was meant to minister, and which are at war with its excesses. For example, we have reason or intellectual energy, given us for the pursuit and acquisition of truth; and this is essentially a disinterested principle; for truth, which is its object, is of a universal, impartial nature. The great province of the intellectual faculty, is, to acquaint the individual with the laws and order of the divine system; a system, which spreads infinitely beyond himself, of which he forms a very small part, which embraces innumerable beings equally favoured by God, and which proposes as its sublime and beneficent end, the ever-growing good of the whole. Again, human nature has a variety of affections, corresponding to our domestic and most common relations; affections which in multitudes overpower self-love, which make others the chief object of our care, which nerve the arm for ever-recurring toil by day, and strengthen the wearied frame to forego the slumbers of night. Then there belongs to every man the general sentiment of humanity, which responds to all human sufferings, to a stranger's tears and groans, and often prompts to great sacrifices for his relief. Above all, there is the moral principle, that which should especially be called a man's self, for it is clothed with a kingly authority over his whole nature, and was plainly given to bear sway over every desire. This is eminently a disinterested principle. Its very essence is impartiality. It has no respect of persons. It is the principle of justice, taking the rights of all under its protection, and frowning on the least wrong, however largely it may serve ourselves. This moral nature especially delights in, and enjoins a universal charity, and makes the heart thrill with exulting joy, at the sight or hearing of magnanimous deeds, of perils fronted, and death endured, in the cause of humanity. Now, these various principles, and especially the last, are as truly ourselves as self-love. When a man thinks of himself, these ought to occur to him as his chief attri-

butes. He can hardly injure himself more, than by excluding these from his conception of himself, and by making self-love the great constituent of his nature.

We have urged these remarks on the narrow sense often given to the word *self*, because we are persuaded, that it leads to degrading ideas of human nature, and to the pernicious notion, that we practise a virtuous self-sacrifice in holding it in contempt. We would have it understood, that high faculties form this despised self, as truly as low desires; and we would add, that when these are faithfully unfolded, this self takes rank among the noblest beings in the universe. To illustrate this thought, we ask the reader's attention to an important, but much neglected view of virtue and religion. These are commonly spoken of in an abstract manner, as if they were distinct from ourselves, as if they were foreign existences, which enter the human mind, and dwell there in a kind of separation from itself. Now, religion and virtue, wherever they exist, are the mind itself and nothing else. They are human nature, and nothing else. A good man's piety and virtue are not distinct possessions; they are himself, and all the glory which belongs to them belongs to himself. What is religion? Not a foreign inhabitant, not something alien to our nature, which comes and takes up its abode in the soul. It is the soul itself, lifting itself up to its Maker. What is virtue? It is the soul, listening to, and revering, and obeying a law which belongs to its very essence, the law of duty. We sometimes smile, when we hear men decrying human nature, and in the same breathing exalting religion to the skies; as if religion were anything more than human nature acting in obedience to its chief law. Religion and virtue, as far as we possess them, are ourselves; and the homage which is paid to these attributes, is, in truth, a tribute to the soul of man. Self-crucifixion then, should it exclude self-reverence, would be anything but virtue.

We would briefly suggest another train of thought leading to the same result. Self-crucifixion, or self-renunciation, is a work, and a work requires an agent. By whom then is it accomplished? We answer, by the

man himself, who is the subject of it. It is he who is summoned to the effort. He is called by a voice within, and by the law of God, to put forth power over himself, to rule his own spirit, to subdue every passion. Now, this inward power, which self-crucifixion supposes and demands, is the most signal proof of a high nature which can be given. It is the most illustrious power which God confers. It is a sovereignty worth more than that over outward nature. It is the chief constituent of the noblest order of virtues; and its greatness, of course, demonstrates the greatness of the human mind, which is perpetually bound and summoned to put it forth. But this is not all. Self-crucifixion has an object, an end; and what is it? Its great end is, to give liberty and energy to our nature. Its aim is, not to break down the soul, but to curb those lusts and passions, "which war against the soul," that the moral and intellectual faculties may rise into new life, and may manifest their divine original. Self-crucifixion, justly viewed, is the suppression of the passions, that the power and progress of thought, and conscience, and pure love, may be unrestrained. It is the destruction of the brute, that the angel may unfold itself within. It is founded on our godlike capacities, and the expansion and glory of these is its end. Thus the very duty, which by some is identified with self-contempt, implies and imposes self-reverence. It is the belief and the choice of perfection as our inheritance and our end.

We have thus shown under what great limitations, self-crucifixion, or self-renunciation, is to be understood, and how remote it is from self-contempt. Our purpose was, after closing this discussion, to give a rational interpretation of the phrases in which Fenelon has enjoined this duty. But our limits allow us just to glance at one or two of these. Perhaps he calls upon us to do nothing so often as "to renounce our own wills." This is a favourite phrase; and what does it imply? that we are to cease to will? Nothing less. The truth is, that the human will is never so strenuous, as in this act which is called the renunciation of itself, and by nothing does it more build up its own energy. The phrase means,

that we should sacrifice inclination at the least suggestion of duty. But who does not know, that the mind never puts forth such strength of purpose or will, as in overcoming desire? And what is the highest end and benefit of this warfare with desire? It is, that the mind may accumulate force of moral purpose, that the will may more sternly, unconquerably resolve on the hardest duties and sublimest virtues to which God may call us.

Once more, we are again and again exhorted by Fenelon to "forget ourselves." And what means this? Self-oblivion, literally understood, is an impossibility. We may as easily annihilate our being as our self-consciousness. Self-remembrance is in truth a duty, needful to the safety of every hour, and especially necessary to the great work of life, which is the conforming of ourselves, of our whole nature, to the will of God. There is no danger of our thinking of ourselves too much, if we will think justly; that is, if we will view ourselves as what we are, as moral beings, accountable to a divine lawgiver, framed to delight in and to seek virtue, framed for an ever-spreading philanthropy, called to sympathise with and to suffer for others, and through this path to ascend to our Original. There are, however, senses in which we cannot too much forget ourselves. Our improvements of whatever kind, our good deeds, our virtues, whenever they are seized upon and magnified by self-love, or so recalled as to lift us above others, and to stifle that sense of deficiency and thirst for progress, by which alone we can be carried forward, these we cannot too earnestly drive from our thoughts. Our distinctions, whether of mind, body, or condition, when they minister to vanity or pride, when they weaken the consciousness of a common nature with the human race, narrow our sympathies, or deprave our judgments, these we cannot be too solicitous to forget. Our pleasures, when they are so exaggerated by the imagination as to distract and overwhelm the sense of duty, should be forced to quit their grasp on our minds. Such parts or constituents of ourselves we are to forget. Our moral, intellectual, immortal nature we cannot remember too much. Under the consciousness of it, we are always to live.

According to the views now given, self-crucifixion is the subjection or sacrifice of the inferior to the higher principles of our nature. It is the practical recognition of the supremacy and dignity of our rational and moral powers. No duty involves a more reverential view and care of ourselves. We have been the more solicitous to give this view of self-renunciation, because its true spirit is often mistaken, because it is often so set forth as to degrade, instead of exalting the mind. In truth, we feel more and more the importance of bringing men to juster conceptions of the inward gifts with which God has enriched them. We desire nothing so much, as to open their eyes to their own spiritual possessions. We feel indeed the difficulties of the subject. We know that we have to combat with a secret incredulity in many minds. We know, that the clearest expositions will be imperfectly understood by those, who have nothing in their experience to interpret what we utter. The mind, we are aware, can be clearly revealed to itself, only by its own progress. Its capacities of thought, of action, of endurance, of triumphing over pleasure and pain, of identifying itself with other beings, of seeking truth without prejudice and without fear, of uniting itself with God, of sacrificing life to duty, these immortal energies can only be felt to be real, and duly honoured, by those in whom they are gradually and steadily unfolded. Still we do not despair of meeting some response, though faint, in multitudes. Such a spirit, as God has breathed into men, cannot easily exist, without giving some signs of its divine original. In most men, there are some revelations of their own nature, some beams of a light which belongs not to the earth, some sympathies with what is good and great in character, some perceptions of beauty, some gushings from the deep fountain of love in the soul, some thirstings for a purer happiness, some experience of the peculiar joy of a disinterested deed, some dim conceptions at least of their intimate relations to God. Most men understand through experience these testimonies to the secret wealth and immortal destination of the soul; whilst, in not a few, such a measure of intellectual and moral power has

been called forth, that nothing is needed but a wise direction of their thoughts upon themselves, to open to them the magnificent prospect of their own spiritual energy, and of the unbounded good into which it may be unfolded. For such we have written. We regard nothing so important to a human being, as the knowledge of his own mind, and of its intimate connexion with the Infinite Mind. Faith in what man contains as a germ in his own breast, faith in what he may become, in what he was framed to be, in that state of power, light, purity, joy, to which Jesus Christ came to exalt him, this faith seems to us the quickening, saving, renovating principle, which God sent his Son to revive in the soul, and happy are they who can spread its empire in the world.

We have finished our remarks on the first element of perfection, according to Fenelon, self-crucifixion. We proceed to the second, love to God. On this topic we intended to enlarge, but have left ourselves little room. We are happy to say, that we have less to object to Fenelon's expositions under this head, than under the former. Of the grandeur and the happiness of this principle he speaks truly, worthily, in the penetrating language of calm and deep conviction. In one particular, we think him defective. He has not stated, and in truth, very few do state, with sufficient strength and precision, the moral foundation and the moral nature of religion. He has not taught, with sufficient clearness, the great truth, that love to God is from beginning to end the love of virtue. He did not sufficiently feel, that religion is the expansion and most perfect form of the moral faculty of man. He sometimes teaches, that to do God's will, we must renounce ourselves and silence reason; as if the divine will were not in accordance with our faculties; as if it were something dark and mysterious; as if to follow it, we must quench the light of our own minds. Now, the truth is, that the divine will is in harmony with our nature. It is God's approbation and injunction of that moral rectitude, of which the great lines are written on the human soul, and to which reason and conscience, even when they fail to secure obedience, do yet secretly, and

in no small degree, respond. The human mind and the divine law are not distinct and disconnected things. If man were not a law to himself, he could not receive the revelation of a law from Heaven. Were not the principle of duty an essential part of his mind, he could be bound to no obedience. Religion has its foundation in our moral nature, and is indeed its most enlarged and glorious form, and we lament that this great truth does not shine more brightly in the pages of Fenelon. We intended to give to it a particular discussion; but as we cannot do it justice in the present article, we prefer to dismiss it, and to offer a few miscellaneous remarks on that sentiment of love towards God on which our author so perpetually insists.

We are aware that, to some men, Fenelon may seem an enthusiast. Some may doubt or deny the possibility of that strong, deep, supreme affection towards the Supreme Being, with which Fenelon's book overflows. We wonder at this scepticism. We know no property of human nature more undoubted, than its capacity and fulness of affection. We see its love overflowing in its domestic connexions, in friendships, and especially in its interest in beings separated by oceans and the lapse of ages. Let it not be said, that the affections, to which we here refer, have fellow-beings for their objects, and do not therefore prove our capacity of religious attachment. The truth is, that one spirit runs through all our affections, as far as they are pure; and love to mankind, directed aright, is the germ and element of love to the Divinity. Whatever is excellent and venerable in human beings, is of God, and in attaching ourselves to it we are preparing our hearts for its Author. Whoever sees and recognises the moral dignity of impartial justice and disinterested goodness in his fellow-creatures, has begun to pay homage to the attributes of God. The first emotion awakened in the soul, we mean filial attachment, is the dawning of love to our Father in Heaven. Our deep interest in the history of good and great men, our veneration towards enlightened legislators, our sympathy with philanthropists, our delight in mighty efforts of intellect consecrated to a good cause,

all these sentiments prove our capacity of an affectionate reverence to God; for he is at once the inspirer and the model of this intellectual and moral grandeur in his creatures. We even think, that our love of nature has an affinity with the love of God, and was meant as a preparation for it; for the harmonies of nature are only his wisdom made visible; the heavens, so sublime, are a revelation of his immensity; and the beauty of creation images to us his overflowing love and blessedness. To us, hardly anything seems plainer, than that the soul was made for God. Not only its human affections guide it to him; not only its deep wants, its dangers, and helplessness, guide it to him; there are still higher indications of the end for which it was made. It has a capacity of more than human love, a principle or power of adoration, which cannot bound itself to finite natures, which carries up the thoughts above the visible universe, and which, in approaching God, rises into a solemn transport, a mingled awe and joy, prophetic of a higher life; and a brighter signature of our end and happiness cannot be conceived.

We are aware that it may be objected, that many and great obstructions to a supreme love of God belong to our very constitution and condition, and that these go far to disprove the doctrine of our being framed for religion as our chief good. But this argument does not move us. We learn from every survey of man's nature and history, that he is ordained to approach the end of his creation through many and great obstructions; that effort is the immutable law of his being; that a good, in proportion to its grandeur, is encompassed with hardship. The obstructions to religion are not greater than those to knowledge; and accordingly history gives as dark views of human ignorance, as of human guilt. Yet who, on this ground, denies that man was formed for knowledge, that progress in truth is the path of nature, and that he has impulses which are to carry forward his intellectual powers without end? It is God's pleasure, in his provisions for the mind, as well as for the body, to give us in a rude state the materials of good, and to leave us to frame from them, amidst much conflict, a

character of moral and religious excellence; and
ordination we see his wise benevolence; for by t
may rise to the unutterable happiness of a free a
ral union with our Creator. We ought to add, tl
obstructions to the love of God do not lie wholly
selves. Perhaps the greatest is a false theology.
interposes thick clouds between the soul and its
It darkens and dishonours God and his works, and
nothing to sustain our trust and love.

The motives which are most commonly urg
cherishing supreme affection towards God, are
from our frailty and weakness, and from our n
more than human succour in the trials of life and
pains of death. But religion has a still higher
It answers to the deepest want of human nature.
refer to our want of some being or beings, to wh
may give our hearts, whom we may love more th
selves, for whom we may live and be ready to di
whose character responds to that idea of perf
which, however dim and undefined, is an essenti
ment of every human soul. We cannot be hap
yond our love. At the same time, love may pro
chief woe, if bestowed unwisely, disproportionatel
on unworthy objects; if confined to beings of im
virtue, with whose feelings we cannot always inn
ly sympathise, whose interests we cannot always
eously promote, who narrow us to themselves i
of breathing universal charity, who are frail, m
exposed to suffering, pain, and death. To se
growing happiness and a spotless virtue, we ne
the heart a being worthy of its whole treasure o
to whom we may consecrate our whole exister
approaching whom we enter an atmosphere of
and brightness, in sympathising with whom we c
only noble sentiments, in devoting ourselves to
we espouse great and enduring interests, in
character we find the spring of an ever enlarging
anthropy, and by attachment to whom, all our
attachments are hallowed, protected, and supplie
tender and sublime consolations under bereaveme
blighted hope. Such a being is God.

The word which Fenelon has most frequently used to express the happiness to which the mind ascends by a supreme love of God, is "peace," perhaps the most expressive which language affords. We fear, however, that its full import is not always received. There is a twofold peace. The first is negative. It is relief from disquiet and corroding care. It is repose after conflict and storms. But there is another and a higher peace, to which this is but the prelude, "a peace of God which passeth all understanding," and properly called "the kingdom of heaven within us." This state is anything but negative. It is the highest and most strenuous action of the soul, but an entirely harmonious action, in which all our powers and affections are blended in a beautiful proportion, and sustain and perfect one another. It is more than silence after storms. It is as the concord of all melodious sounds. Has the reader never known a season, when, in the fullest flow of thought and feeling, in the universal action of the soul, an inward calm, profound as midnight silence, yet bright as the still summer noon, full of joy, but unbroken by one throb of tumultuous passion, has been breathed through his spirit, and given him a glimpse and presage of the serenity of a happier world? Of this character is the peace of religion. It is a conscious harmony with God and the creation, an alliance of love with all beings, a sympathy with all that is pure and happy, a surrender of every separate will and interest, a participation of the spirit and life of the universe, an entire concord of purpose with its Infinite Original. This is peace, and the true happiness of man; and we think that human nature has never entirely lost sight of this its great end. It has always sighed for a repose, in which energy of thought and will might be tempered with an all-pervading tranquillity. We seem to discover aspirations after this good, a dim consciousness of it, in all ages of the world. We think we see it in those systems of Oriental and Grecian philosophy, which proposed, as the consummation of present virtue, a release from all disquiet, and an intimate union and harmony with the Divine Mind. We even think, that we trace this conscious-

ness, this aspiration, in the works of ancient art which time has spared to us, in which the sculptor, aiming to embody his deepest thoughts of human perfection, has joined with the fulness of life and strength, a repose, which breathes into the spectator an admiration as calm as it is exalted. Man, we believe, never wholly loses the sentiment of his true good. There are yearnings, sighings, which he does not himself comprehend, which break forth alike in his prosperous and adverse seasons, which betray a deep, indestructible faith in a good that he has not found, and which, in proportion as they grow distinct, rise to God, and concentrate the soul in him, as at once its life and rest, the fountain at once of energy and of peace.

In the remarks which have now been suggested by the writings of Fenelon, we have aimed to free religion from exaggerations, which, we fear, weaken its influence over reasonable men, and at the same time to illustrate its dignity and happiness. We want time, or we should enlarge on the importance of this great subject to every human being. We cannot however leave it, without earnestly recommending it to the attention of men of superior minds. The neglect which it generally receives from these is one of the most discouraging signs of our times. The claims of religion on intelligent men are not yet understood, and the low place which it holds among the objects of liberal inquiry, will one day be recollected as the shame of our age. Some remarks on this topic may form a not unsuitable conclusion to the present article.

It is, we fear, an unquestionable fact, that religion, considered as an intellectual subject, is in a great measure left to a particular body of men, as a professional concern; and the fact is as much to be wondered at as deplored. It is wonderful that any mind, and especially a superior one, should not see in religion the highest object of thought. It is wonderful that the infinite God, the noblest theme of the universe, should be considered as a monopoly of professed theologians; that a subject so vast, awful, and exalting, as our relation to the Divinity, should be left to technical men, to be handled so

much for sectarian purposes. Religion is the property and dearest interest of the human race. Every man has an equal concern in it. It should be approached with an independence on human authority. It should be rescued from all the factions which have seized upon it as their particular possession. Men of the highest intellect should feel, that, if there be a God, then his character and our relation to him throw all other subjects into obscurity, and that the intellect, if not consecrated to him, can never attain its true use, its full dimensions, and its proper happiness. Religion, if it be true, is central truth, and all knowledge which is not gathered round it, and quickened and illuminated by it, is hardly worthy the name. To this great theme we would summon all orders of mind, the scholar, the statesman, the student of nature, and the observer of life. It is a subject to which every faculty and every acquisition may pay tribute, which may receive aids and lights from the accuracy of the logician, from the penetrating spirit of philosophy, from the intuitions of genius, from the researches of history, from the science of the mind, from physical science, from every branch of criticism, and, though last not least, from the spontaneous suggestions and the moral aspirations of pure but unlettered men.

It is a fact which shocks us, and which shows the degraded state of religion, that not a few superior minds look down upon it as a subject beneath their investigation. Though allied with all knowledge, and especially with that of human nature and human duty, it is regarded as a separate and inferior study, particularly fitted to the gloom of a convent, and the seclusion of a minister. Religion is still confounded, in many and in gifted minds, with the jargon of monks, and the subtleties and strifes of theologians. It is thought a mystery, which, far from coalescing, wars with our other knowledge. It is never ranked with the sciences which expand and adorn the mind. It is regarded as a method of escaping future ruin, not as a vivifying truth through which the intellect and heart are alike to be invigorated and enlarged. Its bearing on the great objects of thought and

t interests of life is hardly suspected. This tion of religion into a technical study, this dis- of it from morals, from philosophy, from the objects of liberal research, has done it infinite has checked its progress, has perpetuated errors gathered round it in times of barbarism and igno- has made it a mark for the sophistry and ridicule licentious, and has infused a lurking scepticism many powerful understandings. Nor has religion red alone. The whole mind is darkened by the uration of this its central light. Its reasonings and ments become unstable through want of this foun- on to rest upon. Religion is to the whole sphere of h, what God is to the universe, and in dethroning or confining it to a narrow range, we commit very ch such an injury on the soul, as the universe would ffer, were the Infinite Being to abandon it, or to con- act his energy to a small province of his creation.

The injury done to literature by divorcing it from eligion, is a topic worthy of separate discussion. Lite- ature has thus lost power and permanent interest. It has become, in a great measure, superficial, an image of transient modes of thought and of arbitrary forms of life, not the organ and expression of immutable truth, and of deep workings of the soul. We beg not to be misunderstood. We have no desire that literature should confine itself wholly or chiefly to religious topics, and we hardly know a greater calamity which it could incur, than by degenerating into religious cant. Next to profaneness, we dread the affectation of piety and the mechanical repetition of sacred phraseology. We only lament, that literature has so generally been the product and utterance of minds which have not lived, thought, and written under the light of a rational and sublime faith. Severed from this, it wants the principle of immortality. We do not speak lightly when we say, that all works of the intellect, which have not in some measure been quickened by the spirit of religion, are doomed to perish or to lose their power; and that genius is preparing for itself a sepulchre, when it disjoins itself from the Universal Mind. Religion is not always to remain

in its present dark, depressed condition. Already there are signs of a brighter day. It begins to be viewed more generously. It is gradually attracting to itself superior understandings. It is rising from the low rank of a professional, technical study, and asserting its supremacy among the objects of the mind. A new era, we trust, is opening upon the world, and all literature will feel its power. In proportion as the true and sublime conception of God shall unfold itself in the soul, and shall become there a central sun, shedding its beams on all objects of thought, there will be a want of sympathy with all works which have not been quickened by this heavenly influence. It will be felt that the poet has known little of nature, that he has seen it only under clouds, if he have not seen it under this celestial light. It will be felt, that man, the great subject of literature, when viewed in separation from his Maker and his end, can be as little understood and portrayed, as a plant torn from the soil in which it grew, and cut off from communication with the clouds and sun.

We are aware that objections will spring up to the doctrine, that all literature should be produced under the influence of religion. We shall be told, that in this way literature will lose all variety and spirit, that a monotonous and solemn hue will spread itself over writing, and that a library will have the air of a tomb. We do not wonder at this fear. Religion has certainly been accustomed to speak in sepulchral tones, and to wear any aspect but a bright and glowing one. It has lost its free and various movement. But let us not ascribe to its nature, what has befallen it from adverse circumstances. The truth is, that religion, justly viewed, surpasses all other principles, in giving a free and manifold action to the mind. It recognises in every faculty and sentiment the workmanship of God, and assigns a sphere of agency to each. It takes our whole nature under its guardianship, and with a parental love ministers to its inferior as well as higher gratifications. False religion mutilates the soul, sees evil in our innocent sensibilities, and rules with a tyrant's frown and rod. True religion is a mild and lawful sovereign, governing to protect, to

give strength, to unfold all our inward resources. We believe, that under its influence, literature is to pass its present limits, and to put itself forth in original forms of composition. Religion is of all principles most fruitful, multiform, and unconfined. It is sympathy with that Being, who seems to delight in diversifying the modes of his agency, and the products of his wisdom and power. It does not chain us to a few essential duties, or express itself in a few unchanging modes of writing. It has the liberality and munificence of nature, which not only produces the necessary root and grain, but pours forth fruits and flowers. It has the variety and bold contrasts of nature, which, at the foot of the awful mountain, scoops out the freshest, sweetest valleys, and embosoms in the wild, troubled ocean, islands, whose vernal airs, and loveliness, and teeming fruitfulness, almost breathe the joys of Paradise. Religion will accomplish for literature what it most needs; that is, will give it depth, at the same time that it heightens its grace and beauty. The union of these attributes is most to be desired. Our literature is lamentably superficial, and to some the beautiful and the superficial even seem to be naturally conjoined. Let not beauty be so wronged. It resides chiefly in profound thoughts and feelings. It overflows chiefly in the writings of poets, gifted with a sublime and piercing vision. A beautiful literature springs from the depth and fulness of intellectual and moral life, from an energy of thought and feeling, to which nothing, as we believe, ministers so largely as enlightened religion.

So far from a monotonous solemnity overspreading literature in consequence of the all-pervading influence of religion, we believe, that the sportive and comic forms of composition, instead of being abandoned, will only be refined and improved. We know that these are supposed to be frowned upon by piety; but they have their root in the constitution which God has given us, and ought not therefore to be indiscriminately condemned. The propensity to wit and laughter does indeed, through excessive indulgence, often issue in a character of heartless levity, low mimickry, or unfeeling ridicule. It often seeks gratification in regions of im-

purity, throws a gaiety round vice, and sometimes even pours contempt on virtue. But, though often and mournfully perverted, it is still a gift of God, and may and ought to minister, not only to innocent pleasure, but to the intellect and the heart. Man was made for relaxation as truly as for labour; and by a law of his nature, which has not received the attention it deserves, he finds perhaps no relaxation so restorative, as that in which he reverts to his childhood, seems to forget his wisdom, leaves the imagination to exhilarate itself by sportive inventions, talks of amusing incongruities in conduct and events, smiles at the innocent eccentricities and odd mistakes of those whom he most esteems, allows himself in arch allusions or kind-hearted satire, and transports himself into a world of ludicrous combinations. We have said, that on these occasions, the mind seems to put off its wisdom; but the truth is, that in a pure mind, wisdom retreats, if we may so say, to its centre, and there unseen, keeps guard over this transient folly, draws delicate lines which are never to be passed in the freest moments, and, like a judicious parent watching the sports of childhood, preserves a stainless innocence of soul in the very exuberance of gaiety. This combination of moral power with wit and humour, with comic conceptions and irrepressible laughter, this union of mirth and virtue, belongs to an advanced stage of the character; and we believe, that in proportion to the diffusion of an enlightened religion, this action of the mind will increase, and will overflow in compositions, which, joining innocence to sportiveness, will communicate unmixed delight. Religion is not at variance with occasional mirth. In the same character, the solemn thought and the sublime emotions of the improved Christian, may be joined with the unanxious freedom, buoyancy, and gaiety of early years.

We will add but one more illustration of our views. We believe that the union of religion with genius, will favour that species of composition to which it may seem at first to be least propitious. We refer to that department of literature, which has for its object the delineation of the stronger and more terrible and guilty passions.

Strange as it may appear, these gloomy and appalling features of our nature may be best comprehended and portrayed by the purest and noblest minds. The common idea is, that overwhelming emotions, the more they are experienced, can the more effectually be described. We have one strong presumption against this doctrine. Tradition leads us to believe, that Shakspeare, though he painted so faithfully and fearfully the storms of passion, was a calm and cheerful man. The passions are too engrossed by their objects to meditate on themselves; and none are more ignorant of their growth and subtle workings than their own victims. Nothing reveals to us the secrets of our own souls like religion; and in disclosing to us, in ourselves, the tendency of passion to absorb every energy, and to spread its hues over every thought, it gives us a key to all souls; for in all, human nature is essentially one, having the same spiritual elements, and the same grand features. No man, it is believed, understands the wild and irregular motions of the mind, like him in whom a principle of divine order has begun to establish peace. No man knows the horror of thick darkness which gathers over the slaves of vehement passion, like him who is rising into the light and liberty of virtue. There is indeed a selfish shrewdness, which is thought to give a peculiar and deep insight into human nature. But the knowledge of which it boasts, is partial, distorted, and vulgar, and wholly unfit for the purposes of literature. We value it little. We believe that no qualification avails so much to a knowledge of human nature in all its forms, in its good and evil manifestations, as that enlightened, celestial charity, which religion alone inspires; for this establishes sympathies between us and all men, and thus makes them intelligible to us. A man, imbued with this spirit, alone contemplates vice, as it really exists, and as it ought always to be described. In the most depraved fellow beings he sees partakers of his own nature. Amidst the terrible ravages of the passions, he sees conscience, though prostrate, not destroyed, nor wholly powerless. He sees the proofs of an unextinguished moral life, in inward struggles, in occasional relentings,

in sighings for lost innocence, in reviving throbs of early affections, in the sophistry by which the guilty mind would become reconciled to itself, in remorse, in anxious forebodings, in despair, perhaps in studied recklessness and cherished self-forgetfulness. These conflicts between the passions and the moral nature, are the most interesting subjects in the branch of literature to which we refer, and we believe, that to portray them with truth and power, the man of genius can find in nothing such effectual aid, as in the developement of the moral and religious principles in his own breast.

We have given but a superficial view of a great subject. The connexion of religion with intellect and literature is yet to be pointed out. We conclude with expressing our strong conviction that the human mind will become more various, piercing, and all-comprehending, more capable of understanding and expressing the solemn and the sportive, the terrible and the beautiful, the profound and the tender, in proportion as it shall be illumined and penetrated by the true knowledge of God. Genius, intellect, imagination, taste, and sensibility, must all be baptized into religion, or they will never know, and never make known, their real glory and immortal power.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT AGAINST

CALVINISM,

Illustrated in a Review of a Work entitled "A General View of the DOCTRINES of CHRISTIANITY, designed more especially for the Edification and Instruction of Families.—Boston, 1809."

THE work, of which we have prefixed the title to this article, was published several years ago, and has been read by many among us with pleasure and profit. But it is not known as widely as it should be, and we wish to call to it the notice which it merits. It is not an original work, but was compiled chiefly from the writings of the Rev. Robert Fellowes, whose name is probably known to most of our readers. The title we think not altogether happy, because it raises an expectation which the book does not answer. We should expect from it a regular statement of the great truths of our religion; but we find, what at present is perhaps as useful, a vindication of Christianity from the gross errors, which Calvinism has laboured to identify with this divine system. This may easily be supposed from the table of contents. The book professes to treat of the following subjects;—The nature of religion and the mistakes that occur on that subject; the free agency and accountableness of man; the fall of Adam, and original sin; the doctrine of faith in general, and of religious faith in particular; the doctrine of works; the doctrine of regeneration; the doctrine of repentance; the doctrine of grace; the doctrine of election and reprobation; the doctrine of perseverance; the visiting of the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; and the sin against

the Holy Ghost.—To those who are acquainted with the five thorny points of Calvinism, the design of this compilation will be sufficiently understood from the enumeration of topics now given; and few designs are more praiseworthy, than to free Christianity from the reproach brought upon it by that system.

The work under review is professedly popular in its style and mode of discussion. It has little refined and elaborate reasoning, but appeals to the great moral principles of human nature, and to the general strain of the Scriptures. It expresses strongly and without circumlocution the abhorrence with which every mind, uncorrupted by false theology, must look on Calvinism; and although some of its delineations may be overcharged, yet they are substantially correct, and their strength is their excellence. The truth is, that nothing is so necessary on this subject as to awaken moral feeling in men's breasts. Calvinism owes its perpetuity to the influence of fear in palsying the moral nature. Men's minds and consciences are subdued by terror, so that they dare not confess, even to themselves, the shrinking, which they feel, from the unworthy views which this system gives of God; and by thus smothering their just abhorrence, they gradually extinguish it, and even come to vindicate in God what would disgrace his creatures. A voice of power and solemn warning is needed to rouse them from this lethargy, to give them a new and a juster dread, the dread of incurring God's displeasure, by making him odious, and exposing religion to insult and aversion.—In the present article, we intend to treat this subject with great freedom. But we beg that it may be understood that by Calvinism we intend only the peculiarities or distinguishing features of that system. We would also have it remembered, that these peculiarities form a small part of the religious faith of a Calvinist. He joins with them the general, fundamental, and most important truths of Christianity, by which they are always neutralized in a greater or less degree, and in some cases nullified. Accordingly it has been our happiness to see in the numerous body by which they are professed, some of the brightest ex-

amples of Christian virtue. Our hostility to the doctrine does not extend to its advocates. In bearing our strongest testimony against error, we do not the less honour the moral and religious worth with which it is often connected.

The book under review will probably be objected to by theologians, because it takes no notice of a distinction, invented by Calvinistic metaphysicians, for rescuing their doctrines from the charge of aspersing God's equity and goodness. We refer to the distinction between *natural and moral inability*, a subtlety which may be thought to deserve some attention, because it makes such a show in some of the principal books of this sect. But with due deference to its defenders, it seems to us groundless and idle, a distinction without a difference. An inability to do our duty, which is *born* with us, is to all intents and according to the established meaning of the word, *natural*. Call it moral, or what you please, it is still a part of the nature which our Creator gave us, and to suppose that he punishes us for it, because it is an inability seated in the will, is just as absurd, as to suppose him to punish us for a weakness of sight or of a limb. Common people cannot understand this distinction, cannot split this hair; and it is no small objection to Calvinism, that, according to its ablest defenders, it can only be reconciled to God's perfections, by a metaphysical subtlety, which the mass of people cannot comprehend.

If we were to speak as critics of the style of this book, we should say, that whilst generally clear, and sometimes striking, it has the faults of the style which was very current not many years ago in this country, and which, we rejoice to say, is giving place to a better. The style to which we refer, and which threatened to supplant good writing in this country, intended to be elegant, but fell into jejuneness and insipidity. It delighted in words and arrangements of words, which were little soiled by common use, and mistook a spruce neatness for grace. We had a Procrustes' bed for sentences, and there seemed to be a settled war between the style of writing and the free style of conversation.

Times we think have changed. Men have learned more to write as they speak, and are ashamed to dress up familiar thoughts, as if they were just arrived from a far country, and could not appear in public without a foreign and studied attire. They have learned that common words are common, precisely because most fitted to express real feeling and strong conception, and that the circuitous, measured phraseology, which was called elegance, was but the parade of weakness. They have learned that words are the signs of thought, and worthless counterfeits without it, and that style is good, when, instead of being anxiously cast into a mould, it seems a free and natural expression of thought, and gives to us with power the workings of the author's mind.

We have been led to make these remarks on the style which in a degree marks the book before us, from a persuasion that this mode of writing has been particularly injurious to religion, and to rational religion. It has crept into sermons perhaps more than into any other compositions, and has imbued them with that soporific quality, which they have sometimes been found to possess in an eminent degree. How many hearers have been soothed by a smooth watery flow of words, a regular chime of sentences, and elegantly rocked into repose. We are aware, that preachers, above all writers, are excusable for this style, because it is the easiest; and having too much work to do, they must do it of course in the readiest way. But we mourn the necessity, and mourn still more the effect. It gives us great pleasure to say, that in this particular, we think we perceive an improvement taking place in this region. Preaching is becoming more direct, aims more at impression, and seeks the nearest way to men's hearts and consciences. We often hear from the pulpit strong thought in plain and strong language. It is hoped, from the state of society, that we shall not fly from one extreme to another, and degenerate into coarseness; but perhaps even this is a less evil than tameness and insipidity.

To return; the principal argument against Calvinism, in the General View of Christian Doctrines, is the

moral argument, or that which is drawn from the inconsistency of the system with the Divine perfections. It is plain that a doctrine which contradicts our best ideas of goodness and justice, cannot come from the just and good God, or be a true representation of his character. This moral argument has always been powerful to the pulling down of the strong holds of Calvinism. Even in the dark period, when this system was shaped and finished at Geneva, its advocates often writhed under the weight of it; and we cannot but deem it a mark of the progress of society, that Calvinists are more and more troubled with the palpable repugnance of their doctrines to God's nature, and accordingly labour to soften and explain them, until in many cases the name only is retained. If the stern reformer of Geneva could lift up his head, and hear the mitigated tone in which some of his professed followers dispense his fearful doctrines, we fear, that he could not lie down in peace, until he had poured out his displeasure on their cowardice and degeneracy. He would tell them with a frown, that *moderate Calvinism* was a solecism, a contradiction in terms, and would bid them in scorn to join their real friend, Arminius. Such is the power of public opinion and of an improved state of society on creeds, that naked, undisguised Calvinism is not very fond of showing itself, and many, of consequence, know imperfectly what it means. What, then, is the system against which the View of Christian Doctrines is directed?

Calvinism teaches, that in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit, God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt, so that they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually. It teaches, that all mankind, having fallen in Adam, are under God's wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. It teaches, that from this ruined race God out of his mere good pleasure has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not induced to this choice by any foresight of

their faith or good works, but wholly by his free grace and love; and that having thus predestinated them to eternal life, he renews and sanctifies them by his almighty and special agency, and brings them into a state of grace, from which they cannot fall and perish. It teaches, that the rest of mankind he is pleased to pass over, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the honour of his justice and power; in other words, he leaves the rest to the corruption in which they were born, withholds the grace which is necessary to their recovery, and condemns them to "most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission in hell fire forever." Such is Calvinism, as gathered from the most authentic records of the doctrine. Whoever will consult the famous Assembly's Catechisms and Confession, will see the peculiarities of the system in all their length and breadth of deformity. A man of plain sense, whose spirit has not been broken to this creed by education or terror, will think that it is not necessary for us to travel to heathen countries, to learn how mournfully the human mind may misrepresent the Deity.

The moral argument against Calvinism, of which we have spoken, must seem irresistible to common and unperverted minds, after attending to the brief statement now given. It will be asked with astonishment, How is it possible that men can hold these doctrines, and yet maintain God's goodness and equity?—what principles can be more contradictory? To remove the objection to Calvinism, which is drawn from its repugnance to the Divine perfections, recourse has been had, as before observed, to the distinction between natural and moral inability, and to other like subtleties. But a more common reply, we conceive, has been drawn from the weakness and imperfection of the human mind, and from its incapacity of comprehending God. Calvinists will tell us, that because a doctrine opposes our convictions of rectitude, it is not necessarily false; that apparent are not always real inconsistencies; that God is an infinite and incomprehensible being, and not to be tried by our ideas of fitness and morality; that we bring their system to an incompetent tribunal, when we submit it to the

decision of human reason and conscience; that we are weak judges of what is right and wrong, good and evil in the Deity; that the happiness of the universe may require an administration of human affairs which is very offensive to limited understandings; that we must follow revelation, not reason or moral feeling, and must consider doctrines which shock us in revelation, as awful mysteries, which are dark through our ignorance, and which time will enlighten. How little, it is added, can man explain or understand God's ways? How inconsistent the miseries of life appear with goodness in the Creator? How prone, too, have men always been to confound good and evil, to call the just unjust? How presumptuous is it in such a being, to sit in judgment upon God, and to question the rectitude of the Divine administration, because it shocks *his* sense of rectitude? Such we conceive to be a fair statement of the manner in which the Calvinist frequently meets the objection, that his system is at war with God's attributes—such the reasoning by which the voice of conscience and nature is stifled, and men are reconciled to doctrines which, if tried by the established principles of morality, would be rejected with horror. On this reasoning we purpose to offer some remarks; and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity, to give our views of *the confidence which is due to our rational and moral faculties in religion.*

That God is infinite, and that man often errs, we affirm as strongly as our Calvinistic brethren. We desire to think humbly of ourselves, and reverently of our Creator. In the strong language of Scripture, "We now see through a glass darkly." "We cannot by searching find out God unto perfection? Clouds and darkness are round about him. His judgments are a great deep." God is great and good beyond utterance or thought. We have no disposition to idolize our own powers, or to penetrate the secret counsels of the Deity. But on the other hand, we think it ungrateful to disparage the powers which our Creator has given us, or to question the certainty or importance of the knowledge which he has seen fit to place within our reach. There

is an affected humility, we think, as dangerous as pride. We may rate our faculties too meanly, as well as too boastingly. The worst error in religion, after all, is that of the sceptic, who records triumphantly the weaknesses and wanderings of the human intellect, and maintains that no trust is due to the decisions of this erring reason. We by no means conceive, that man's greatest danger springs from pride of understanding, though we think as badly of this vice as other Christians. The history of the church proves, that men may trust their faculties too little as well as too much, and that the timidity, which shrinks from investigation, has injured the mind, and betrayed the interests of Christianity, as much as an irreverent boldness of thought.

It is an important truth, which, we apprehend, has not been sufficiently developed, that the ultimate reliance of a human being is and must be on his own mind. To confide in God, we must first confide in the faculties by which He is apprehended, and by which the proofs of his existence are weighed. A trust in our ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood, is implied in every act of belief; for to question this ability would of necessity unsettle all belief. We cannot take a step in reasoning or action without a secret reliance on our own minds. Religion, in particular, implies, that we have understandings endowed and qualified for the highest employments of intellect. In affirming the existence and perfections of God, we suppose and affirm the existence in ourselves of faculties which correspond to these sublime objects, and which are fitted to discern them. Religion is a conviction and an act of the human soul; so that in denying confidence to the one, we subvert the truth and claims of the other. Nothing is gained to piety by degrading human nature, for in the competency of this nature to know and judge of God, all piety has its foundation. Our proneness to err instructs us indeed to use our powers with great caution, but not to contemn and neglect them. The occasional abuse of our faculties, be it ever so enormous, does not prove them unfit for their highest end, which is, to form clear and consistent views of God. Because our eyes sometimes

fail or deceive us, would a wise man pluck them out, or cover them with a bandage, and choose to walk and work in the dark?—or, because they cannot distinguish distant objects, can they discern nothing clearly in their proper sphere, and is sight to be pronounced a fallacious guide? Men who, to support a creed, would shake our trust in the calm, deliberate, and distinct decisions of our rational and moral powers, endanger religion more than its open foes, and forge the deadliest weapon for the infidel.

It is true that God is an infinite being, and also true, that his powers and perfections, his purposes and operations, his ends and means, being unlimited, are *incomprehensible.* In other words, they cannot be *wholly taken in* or *embraced* by the human mind. In the strong and figurative language of Scripture, we "know nothing" of God's ways; that is, we know *very few* of them. But this is just as true of the most advanced archangel as of man. In comparison with the vastness of God's system, the range of the highest created intellect is narrow; and in this particular, man's lot does not differ from that of his elder brethren in heaven. We are both confined in our observation and experience to a little spot in the creation. But are an angel's faculties worthy of no trust, or is his knowledge uncertain, because he learns and reasons from a small part of God's works? or are his judgments respecting the Creator to be charged with presumption, because his views do not spread through the whole extent of the universe? We grant, that our understandings cannot stretch beyond a very narrow sphere. But still, the lessons which we learn within this sphere, are just as sure as if it were indefinitely enlarged. Because much is unexplored, we are not to suspect what we have actually discovered. Knowledge is not the less real, because confined. The man who has never set foot beyond his native village, knows its scenery and inhabitants as undoubtingly, as if he had travelled to the poles. We indeed see very little; but that little is as true, as if everything else were seen; and our future discoveries must agree with and support it. Should the whole order

and purposes of the universe be opened to us, it is certain that nothing would be disclosed which would in any degree shake our persuasion, that the earth is inhabited by rational and moral beings, who are authorised to expect from their Creator the most benevolent and equitable government. No extent of observation can unsettle those primary and fundamental principles of moral truth, which we derive from our highest faculties operating in the relations in which God has fixed us. In every region and period of the universe, it will be as true as it is now on the earth, that knowledge and power are the measures of responsibility, and that natural incapacity absolves from guilt. These and other moral verities, which are among our clearest perceptions, would, if possible, be strengthened, in proportion as our powers should be enlarged; because harmony and consistency are the characters of God's administration, and all our researches into the universe only serve to manifest its unity, and to show a wider operation of the laws which we witness and experience on earth.

We grant that God is *incomprehensible*, in the sense already given. But he is not therefore *unintelligible;* and this distinction we conceive to be important. We do not pretend to know the *whole* nature and properties of God, but still we can form some *clear ideas* of him, and can reason from these ideas as justly as from any other. The truth is, that we cannot be said to comprehend any being whatever, not the simplest plant or animal. All have hidden properties. Our knowledge of all is limited. But have we therefore no distinct ideas of the objects around us, and is all our reasoning about them unworthy of trust? Because God is infinite, his name is not therefore a mere sound. It is a representative of some distinct conceptions of our Creator; and these conceptions are as sure, and important, and as proper materials for the reasoning faculty, as they would be if our views were indefinitely enlarged. We cannot indeed trace God's goodness and rectitude through the whole field of his operations; but we know the essential nature of these attributes, and therefore can often judge what accords with and opposes them. God's

goodness, because infinite, does not cease to be goodness, or essentially differ from the same attribute in man; nor does justice change its nature, so that it cannot be understood, because it is seated in an unbounded mind. There have indeed been philosophers, "falsely so called," who have argued from the unlimited nature of God, that we cannot ascribe to him justice and other moral attributes, in any proper or definite sense of those words; and the inference is plain, that all religion or worship, wanting an intelligible object, must be a misplaced, wasted offering. This doctrine from the infidel we reject with abhorrence; but something, not very different, too often reaches us from the mistaken Christian, who, to save his creed, shrouds the Creator in utter darkness. In opposition to both, we maintain that God's attributes are intelligible, and that we can conceive as truly of his goodness and justice, as of these qualities in men. In fact, these qualities are essentially the same in God and man, though differing in degree, in purity, and in extent of operation. We know not and we cannot conceive of any other justice or goodness, than we learn from our own nature; and if God have not these, he is altogether unknown to us as a moral being; he offers nothing for esteem and love to rest upon; the objection of the infidel is just, that worship is wasted; "we worship we know not what."

It is asked, on what authority we ascribe to God, goodness and rectitude, in the sense in which these attributes belong to men, or how we can judge of the nature of attributes in the mind of the Creator? We answer by asking, How it is that we become acquainted with the mind of a fellow-creature? The last is as invisible, as removed from *immediate* inspection, as the first. Still we do not hesitate to speak of the justice and goodness of a neighbour; and how do we gain our knowledge? We answer, by witnessing the effects, operations, and expressions of these attributes. It is a law of our nature to argue from the effect to the cause, from the action to the agent, from the ends proposed and from the means of pursuing them, to the character and disposition of the being in whom we observe them.

By these processes, we learn the invisible mind and character of man; and by the same we ascend to the mind of God, whose works, effects, operations, and ends, are as expressive and significant of justice and goodness, as the best and most decisive actions of men. If this reasoning be sound (and all religion rests upon it), then God's justice and goodness are intelligible attributes, agreeing essentially with the same qualities in ourselves. Their operation indeed is infinitely wider, and they are employed in accomplishing not only immediate but remote and unknown ends. Of consequence, we must expect that many parts of the divine administration will be *obscure*, that is, will not produce *immediate* good, and an *immediate* distinction between virtue and vice. But still the unbounded operation of these attributes, does not change their nature. They are still the same as if they acted in the narrowest sphere. We can still determine in many cases what does not accord with them. We are particularly sure that those essential principles of justice, which enter into and even form our conception of this attribute, must pervade every province and every period of the administration of a just being, and that to suppose the Creator in any instance to forsake them, is to charge him directly with unrighteousness, however loudly the lips may compliment his equity.

"But is it not presumptuous in man," it is continually said, "to sit in judgment on God?" We answer, that to "sit in judgment on God," is an ambiguous and offensive phrase, conveying to common minds the ideas of irreverence, boldness, familiarity. The question would be better stated thus;—Is it not presumptuous in man to judge concerning God, and concerning what agrees or disagrees with his attributes? We answer confidently, No; for in many cases we are competent and even bound to judge. And we plead first in our defence the Scriptures. How continually does God in his Word appeal to the understanding and moral judgment of man? "O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not

done in it?" We observe in the next place, that all religion supposes and is built on judgments passed by us on God and on his operations. Is it not, for example, our duty and a leading part of piety to *praise* God? And what is praising a being, but to adjudge and ascribe to him just and generous deeds and motives? And of what value is praise, except from those who are capable of distinguishing between actions which exalt, and actions which degrade the character? Is it presumption to call God *excellent?* And what is this, but to refer his character to a standard of excellence, to try it by the established principles of rectitude, and to pronounce its conformity to them; that is, to judge of God and his operations?

We are presumptuous, we are told, in judging of our Creator. But he himself has made this our duty, in giving us a moral faculty; and to decline it, is to violate the primary law of our nature. Conscience, the sense of right, the power of perceiving moral distinctions, the power of discerning between justice and injustice, excellence and baseness, is the highest faculty given us by God, the whole foundation of our responsibility, and our sole capacity for religion. Now we are forbidden by this faculty to love a being who wants, or who fails to discover, moral excellence. God, in giving us conscience, has implanted a principle within us, which forbids us to prostrate ourselves before mere power, or to offer praise where we do not discover worth; a principle, which challenges our supreme homage for supreme goodness, and which absolves us from guilt, when we abhor a severe and unjust administration. Our Creator has consequently waived his own claims on our veneration and obedience, any farther than he discovers himself to us in characters of benevolence, equity, and righteousness. He rests his authority on the perfect coincidence of his will and government with those great and fundamental principles of morality written on our souls. He desires no worship, but that which springs from the exercise of our moral faculties upon his character, from our discernment and persuasion of his rectitude and goodness. He asks, he accepts, no love or admiration

but from those who can understand the nature and the proofs of moral excellence.

There are two or three striking facts, which show that there is no presumption in judging of God, and of what agrees or disagrees with his attributes. The first fact is, that the most intelligent and devout men have often employed themselves in proving the existence and perfections of God, and have been honoured for this service to the cause of religion. Now we ask, what is meant by the *proofs* of a divine perfection? They are certain acts, operations, and methods of government, which are proper and natural effects, signs, and expressions of this perfection, and from which, according to the established principles of reasoning, it may be inferred. To prove the divine attributes, is to collect and arrange those works and ways of the Creator, which accord with these attributes, correspond to them, flow from them, and express them. Of consequence, to prove them, requires and implies *the power of judging of what agrees with them*, of discerning their proper marks and expressions. All our treatises on natural theology rest on this power. Every argument in support of a divine perfection is an exercise of it. To deny it, is to overthrow all religion.

Now if such are the proofs of God's goodness and justice, and if we are capable of discerning them, then we are not necessarily presumptuous, when we say of particular measures ascribed to him, that they are inconsistent with his attributes, and cannot belong to him. There is plainly no more presumption in affirming of certain principles of administration, that they oppose God's equity and would prove him unrighteous, than to affirm of others, that they prove him upright and good. There are signs and evidences of injustice as unequivocal as those of justice; and our faculties are as adequate to the perception of the last as of the first. If they must not be trusted in deciding what would prove God unjust, they are unworthy of confidence when they gather evidences of his rectitude; and, of course, the whole structure of religion must fall.

It is no slight objection to the mode of reasoning

adopted by the Calvinist, that it renders the proof of the divine attributes impossible. When we object to his representations of the divine government, that they shock our clearest ideas of goodness and justice, he replies, that still they may be true, because we know very little of God, and what seems unjust to man, may be in the Creator the perfection of rectitude. Now this weapon has a double edge. If the strongest marks and expressions of injustice do not prove God unjust, then the strongest marks of the opposite character do not prove him righteous. If the first do not deserve confidence, because of our narrow views of God, neither do the last. If, when more shall be known, the first may be found consistent with perfect rectitude, so, when more shall be known, the last may be found consistent with infinite malignity and oppression. This reasoning of our opponents casts us on an ocean of awful uncertainty. Admit it, and we have no proofs of God's goodness and equity to rely upon. What we call proofs, may be mere appearances, which a wider knowledge of God may reverse. The future may show us, that the very laws and works of the Creator, from which we now infer his kindness, are consistent with the most determined purpose to spread infinite misery and guilt, and were intended, by raising hope, to add the agony of disappointment to our other woes. Why may not these anticipations, horrible as they are, be verified by the unfolding of God's system, if our reasonings about his attributes are rendered so very uncertain, as Calvinism teaches, by the infinity of his nature?

We have mentioned one fact to show that it is not presumptuous to judge of God, and of what accords with and opposes his attributes; namely, the fact that his attributes are thought susceptible of proof. Another fact, very decisive on this point, is, that Christians of all classes have concurred in resting the truth of Christianity in a great degree on its *internal* evidence, that is, on its accordance with the perfections of God. How common is it to hear from religious teachers, that Christianity is worthy of a good and righteous being, that it bears the marks of a divine original. Volumes have

been written on its internal proofs, on the coincidence of its purposes and spirit with our highest conceptions of God. How common too is it, to say of other religions, that they are at war with the divine nature, with God's rectitude and goodness, and that we want no other proofs of their falsehood? And what does all this reasoning imply? Clearly this, that we are capable of determining, in many cases, what is worthy and what is unworthy of God, what accords with and what opposes his moral attributes. Deny us this capacity, and it would be no presumption against a professed revelation, that it ascribed to the Supreme Being the most detestable practices. It might still be said in support of such a system, that it is arrogant in man to determine what kind of revelation suits the character of the Creator. Christianity then leans, at least in part, and some think chiefly, on internal evidence, or on its agreeableness to God's moral attributes; and is it probable, that this religion, having this foundation, contains representations of God's government which shock our ideas of rectitude, and that it silences our objections by telling us, that we are no judges of what suits or opposes his infinite nature?

We will name one more fact to show, that it is not presumptuous to form these judgments of the Creator. All Christians are accustomed to reason from God's attributes, and to use them as tests of doctrines. In their controversies with one another, they spare no pains to show, that their particular views accord best with the divine perfections, and every sect labours to throw on its adversaries the odium of maintaining what is unworthy of God. Theological writings are filled with such arguments; and yet *we*, it seems, are guilty of awful presumption, when we deny of God principles of administration against which every pure and good sentiment in our breasts rises in abhorrence.

We shall conclude this discussion with an important inquiry. If God's justice and goodness are consistent with those operations and modes of government, which Calvinism ascribes to him, of what use is our belief in these perfections? What expectations can we found

upon them? If it consist with divine rectitude to consign to everlasting misery, beings who have come guilty and impotent from his hand, we beg to know what interest we have in this rectitude, what pledge of good it contains, or what evil can be imagined which may not be its natural result? If justice and goodness, when stretched to infinity, take such strange forms and appear in such unexpected and apparently inconsistent operations, how are we sure, that they will not give up the best men to ruin, and leave the universe to the powers of darkness? Such results indeed seem incompatible with these attributes, but not more so than the acts attributed to God by Calvinism. Is it said, that the divine faithfulness is pledged in the Scriptures to a happier issue of things? But why should not divine faithfulness transcend our poor understandings as much as divine goodness and justice, and why may not God, consistently with this attribute, crush every hope which his Word has raised? Thus all the divine perfections are lost to us as grounds of encouragement and consolation, if we maintain, that their infinity places them beyond our judgment, and that we must expect from them measures and operations entirely opposed to what seems to us most accordant with their nature.

We have thus endeavoured to show that the testimony of our rational and moral faculties against Calvinism, is worthy of trust. We know that this reasoning will be met by the question, What then becomes of Christianity? for this religion plainly teaches the doctrines you have condemned. Our answer is ready. Christianity contains no such doctrines. Christianity, reason, and conscience, are perfectly harmonious on the subject under discussion. Our religion, fairly construed, gives no countenance to that system, which has arrogated to itself the distinction of Evangelical. We cannot, however, enter this field at present. We will only say, that the general spirit of Christianity affords a very strong presumption, that its records teach no such doctrines as we have opposed. This spirit is love, charity, benevolence. Christianity, we all agree, is designed to manifest God as perfect benevolence, and to bring men to

love and imitate him. Now is it probable, that a religion, having this object, gives views of the Supreme Being, from which our moral convictions and benevolent sentiments shrink with horror, and which if made our pattern, would convert us into monsters! It is plain that were a human parent to form himself on the universal Father, as described by Calvinism, that is, were he to bring his children into life totally depraved, and then to pursue them with endless punishment, we should charge him with a cruelty not surpassed in the annals of the world; or were a sovereign to incapacitate his subjects in any way whatever for obeying his laws, and then to torture them in dungeons of perpetual woe, we should say, that history records no darker crime. And is it probable, that a religion, which aims to attract and assimilate us to God, considered as love, should hold him up to us in these heart-withering characters? We may confidently expect to find in such a system, the brightest views of the divine nature; and the same objections lie against interpretations of its records, which savour of cruelty and injustice, as lie against the literal sense of passages which ascribe to God bodily wants and organs. Let the Scriptures be read with a recollection of the spirit of Christianity, and with that modification of particular texts by this general spirit, which a just criticism requires, and Calvinism would no more enter the mind of the reader, than Popery—we had almost said, than Heathenism.

In the remarks now made, it will be seen, we hope, that we have aimed to expose doctrines, not to condemn their professors. It is true, that men are apt to think themselves assailed, when their system only is called to account. But we have no foe but error. We are less and less disposed to measure the piety of others by peculiarities of faith. Men's characters are determined, not by the opinions which they profess, but by those on which their thoughts habitually fasten, which recur to them most forcibly, and which colour their ordinary views of God and duty. The creed of habit, imitation, or fear, may be defended stoutly, and yet have little practical influence. The mind, when

compelled by education or other circumstances to receive irrational doctrines, has yet a power of keeping them, as it were, on its surface, of excluding them from its depths, of refusing to incorporate them with its own being; and when burdened with a mixed, incongruous system, it often discovers a sagacity, which reminds us of the instinct of inferior animals, in selecting the healthful and nutritious portions, and in making them its daily food. Accordingly, the real faith often corresponds little with that which is professed. It often happens, that through the progress of the mind in light and virtue, opinions, once central, are gradually thrown outward, lose their vitality, and cease to be principles of action, whilst through habit they are defended as articles of faith. The words of the creed survive, but its advocates sympathise with it little more than its foes. These remarks are particularly applicable to the present subject. A large number, perhaps a majority, of those who surname themselves with the name of Calvin, have little more title to it than ourselves. They keep the name, and drop the principles which it signifies. They adhere to the system as a whole, but shrink from all its parts and distinguishing points. This silent but real defection from Calvinism, is spreading more and more widely. The grim features of this system are softening, and its stern spirit yielding to conciliation and charity. We beg our readers to consult for themselves the two Catechisms and the Confession of the Westminster Assembly, and to compare these standards of Calvinism, with what now bears its name. They will rejoice, we doubt not, in the triumphs of truth. With these views, we have no disposition to disparage the professors of the system which we condemn, although we believe that its influence is yet so extensive and pernicious as to bind us to oppose it.

Calvinism, we are persuaded, is giving place to better views. It has passed its meridian, and is sinking, to rise no more. It has to contend with foes more formidable than theologians, with foes from whom it cannot shield itself in mystery and metaphysical subtleties, we mean with the progress of the human mind, and

with the progress of the spirit of the Gospel. Society is going forward in intelligence and charity, and of course is leaving the theology of the sixteenth century behind it. We hail this revolution of opinion as a most auspicious event to the Christian cause. We hear much at present of efforts to spread the Gospel. But Christianity is gaining more by the removal of degrading errors, than it would by armies of missionaries who should carry with them a corrupted form of the religion. We think the decline of Calvinism one of the most encouraging facts in our passing history; for this system, by outraging conscience and reason, tends to array these high faculties against revelation. Its errors are peculiarly mournful, because they relate to the character of God. It darkens and stains his pure nature; spoils his character of its sacredness, loveliness, glory; and thus quenches the central light of the universe, makes existence a curse, and the extinction of it a consummation devoutly to be wished. We now speak of the *peculiarities* of this system, and of their natural influence, when not counteracted, as they always are in a greater or less degree, by better views, derived from the spirit and plain lessons of Christianity.

We have had so much to do with our subject, that we have neglected to make the usual extracts from the book which we proposed to review. We earnestly wish, that a work, answering to the title of this, which should give us a "a general view of Christian doctrines," might be undertaken by a powerful hand. Next to a good commentary on the Scriptures, it would be the best service which could be rendered to Christian truth.

REMARKS ON ASSOCIATIONS

FORMED BY THE

WORKING CLASSES OF AMERICA.

An Address delivered before the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, at the Celebration of their Eighth Triennial Festival, October 7, 1830.—By Joseph T. Buckingham, Boston.

The society before which this address was delivered, is composed of mechanics. It was instituted in 1795, and incorporated in 1806, with authority to accumulate a capital fund "for the purpose of relieving the distresses of unfortunate mechanics and their families, to promote inventions and improvements in the mechanic arts, by granting premiums for said inventions and improvements, and to assist young mechanics with loans of money." These noble designs have been faithfully accomplished. The society has a fund of 14,000 dollars (£3,150) permanently invested. On the decease of any member, his family is entitled to receive 40 dollars (£9). For several years past, a school for the instruction of apprentices in reading, writing, and arithmetic, has been kept for three months in the year, and a course of scientific lectures has been instituted, continuing weekly, from October to April, at which some of the most distinguished citizens of the State have gratuitously filled the chair.

These are the honourable objects of a society containing on its rolls the busy, active, and working mechanics of the commonwealth. Thus faithfully have they been pursued. Yet so jealous were the Legisla-

ture, at the time of granting the act of incorporation, lest some injurious design lay concealed beneath the cover of these fair promises, that they limited the original charter to a period of ten years, and reserved the power of dissolving the corporation at any time when they should see fit to do so.

A consequence, in some degree derived from the association for which this society provides, and quite as useful to the whole community as any to which the charter or the rules of the company have been directed, is that lofty bearing, that conscious dignity of character, that self-respect, and public estimation that follows it, which the mechanics of Massachusetts maintain and enjoy. These are not, indeed, the effects of mere association. They follow from the character of the class of which the society is composed. But very much of this honourable independence results from the concert and union of individuals engaged in the same course of industry, and the manliness and respectability which they have thus the means of encouraging and sustaining. It follows, therefore, that in proportion to their numbers, the mechanics of Massachusetts are the most important and influential class of the community, and, together with the yeomanry, the fee simple possessors of the soil, regulate, in an essential manner, the political concerns of the State.

The address before us, delivered by the vice-president of the society, contains much good sentiment and correct opinion, in clear, plain, and forcible language. As a specimen of the lofty tone of its thoughts, as well as its style, and as particularly connected with some observations we are desirous of presenting to our readers, we have selected the following paragraph, to which we most cheerfully assent:—

"This middling class of society, is, at least, half made up of mechanics—hard-labouring, industrious, practical mechanics. The obligations, which society owes to this class of citizens, are universally acknowledged. If the occupation of a mechanic can, in any part of the world, be cause of reproach, or if the name could ever be made to imply anything dishonourable, this is not the region, nor is this the day, for either the one or the other. You, who hear me, need no prompter to

remind you of men, who, though bred in workshops, have honoured, embellished, and defended your country. That grateful country knows and remembers that the mechanics have ever been foremost in her cause, when she has had battles to be fought, or wrongs to be avenged. They have given statesmen to her councils, generals to her armies, and plenipotentiaries to establish her rights at foreign courts, who met the cunning policy of foreign diplomatists with sagacity and prudence equal to their own. In the war of the revolution, they boldly faced the mercenary troops of her unnatural parent, and forced that haughty parent to relinquish its claim to dominion over her soil and her sons. The soil of this country is theirs; they fought for it; they bled for it; their fathers died for it; and perish the tongue that shall ever consent to relinquish one particle of its dust to foreign domination or domestic despotism."—*p.* 15, 16.

In further presenting the claims of the mechanics to the consideration of the public, the author, in addition to such arguments as we very willingly admit, has presented another, which strikes us as original, although we are certainly not prepared to question its accuracy.

"Celibacy prevails among other classes; (whether from necessity, or choice, or fashion, need not now be considered;) but among active mechanics, a bachelor of thirty is as rare as a phœnix among birds, though much less an object of admiration or desire—and among practical farmers, he is as useless, as unseemly, and as much dreaded, as snow in summer or rain in harvest."—*p.* 18.

The subject of this address leads us to advert to various indications, throughout the United States, of an attempt to arrange the citizens into political and hostile parties, in consequence of their supposed condition as depending upon employment, wealth, numbers, and a common interest, by which it may be thought one class is governed, or by which it ought to be governed for the future.

If parties must exist in our community, it is certainly much better that they should grow out of real or supposed differences in political principles or conduct, than that the line of division should be formed by the condition of men in society. Inequality in personal affairs does exist, and always must exist, where there is freedom of action and security for property. Let the state of things be at first ever so equal, industry and intelli-

gence and economy would soon make a difference; and time and chance, which happen to all men, and confound the calculations of the prudent and the efforts of the strong, would in a very little period derange this artificial equality. Some would grow richer and others poorer. Society could not exist if it were otherwise, nor would it exist with the character of a free state, if acquisitions, honestly made, were not secured against invasion or rapacity, to those to whom they properly belonged. The liberty to preserve what is justly acquired, is quite as necessary to the well-being of a community, as the liberty to acquire; for acquisition would be of exceedingly little advantage, if it served merely to invite aggression and justify plunder.

There are higher objects, no doubt, to be maintained by civil government than the mere security of property. Life, character, civil and religious liberty, are among these superior objects. But the world is now too intelligent to make them a matter of doubt. They are not now put into question. The withering power of public opinion scorches and burns up that ancient tyranny, which once pressed upon the rational liberties of mankind; and where the direct force of opinion has not yet been felt, the indications of its future movements are already discernible. The power of government, except for the good of the governed, is no longer maintained by the supposition of divine right, nor can it be continued by oppressive military force. Such is either the condition or the prospect in other countries of the civilised world. We know and feel its reality here. Ours is the government of the people; and the only question for us to settle, is, whether, under a popular government, there can be any such opposition among different classes, as reasonably to divide them into parties, to raise up factions, to set one side in array against the other, and, if not to repeat those scenes of violence and bloodshed which have desolated other countries with the miseries of civil war, to do even so much as to diminish a mutual affection and esteem, to abate any part of that harmony which is the cement of national greatness, as it is of private happiness, or to lessen that kindness and inter-

change of good offices which give the finest polish to society.

Before parties can be formed with design to divide the rich from the poor, or the working men from the idle, it should be ascertained whether any classes, properly so distinguished, do in fact exist in our community. In our estimation they do not.

Wealth is a term that is used for comparison. In reference to the vast fortunes of individuals and families in Europe, we have here certainly no wealthy men. There are several noblemen in England, and more on the continent of Europe, each of whose annual income is supposed equal to the whole capital of our richest citizens. In comparison with our own people, to be sure, one man is richer than another; and there are those among us, who, in respect to the mass of the community, are justly denominated opulent. But who are they? Mostly the architects of their own fortune. Commerce has thrown its treasures into their laps. An honourable enterprise and a lofty intelligence, while they have supplied the means of honest occupation to a crowd of their contemporaries, have, by the blessing of Providence, showered their larger favours on them. But we have here no *class* of rich men. There are none among us, who belong to a prescriptive body of wealthy citizens. Property, to be sure, is inheritable. The ability to transmit to one's children the acquisitions of a life of labour or prosperity, the security of which is the most certain and efficient stimulus to regularity and industry, is indeed a part of our social rights; but the state of public opinion, to say nothing of natural affection or the dictates of justice, secures a very equal division of it by testamentary bequest, and public law does the same in case of intestacy. We find, therefore, that inheritable wealth is ordinarily very small in comparison with that which is acquired, and scarcely ever remains in the same family beyond the third generation.

This prohibition of any prescriptively affluent class, forms the most beautiful feature of our political system, and seems to take away all excuse for any controversy among our citizens, founded on distinctions of wealth.

Gather any of the ordinary associations of our people, and whom do you find? Take the merchants—that liberal, adventurous, and intelligent body of our population, whose avocations are more likely to be favoured by fortune than those which do not so boldly challenge her favours. Among them are many eminent citizens—what patriot does not wish there were more?—enjoying a noble independence for themselves and their children, as a compensation for their days and nights of anxious solicitude, their careful and exact calculations, their provident forecast and their hardy adventure; and among them, too, are how many—what philanthropist would not diminish the number, if he might?—whom adverse winds or the accidents of life, neither to be foreseen nor retrieved, have run upon the shoals and quicksands of disappointment? The class of merchants, truly and justly the wealthiest of our citizens, is surely not a class whose wealth should excite either envy or alarm. Let them count their numbers, estimate their strength, form their plans, project any scheme of personal aggrandisement;—they are outweighed in double proportion by associates, who can have no sympathy in any aristocracy of wealth. Gather together professional men. Let the lawyers be estimated by their property, and obnoxious as they now happen to be to particular opponents, it would be the idlest of all possible apprehensions, to fear any harm which their opulence must pay for. As a body of men, deriving their funds from professional employment, the bar of this country is unquestionably poor. Shortly after the revolution, and again subsequent to the last war, individuals acquired a handsome property by the accumulation of business then thrown into their hands; but fortune, independence, or competency even, is now in very few instances secured by professional labour. The profession is crowded beyond the requirements of the business that devolves upon it. Eminent men have the means of making fortunes, as intellectual greatness must have, wherever it is placed with power for free exercise; but the great majority of lawyers barely live by their labour, and a very considerable number are absolutely poor.

When individuals of this class seem to be better off in the world, than this representation would allow them to be, a more close inspection would show, that some other cause than the emoluments of their profession was the source of their prosperity. The profession of the law is, or has been, the favourite resort of aspiring young men; and the wealthy of other classes have urged their sons into it, and supplied them with the means of spending, in a supposed elegant if not profitable leisure, the honourable avails of a more lucrative life. Separate the patrimonial from the acquired property of the bar, and it has been supposed the whole profession would be insolvent. But if the bar is not rich, it is educated. It has necessarily the advantage of cultivated and enlightened minds. A long and arduous preparation of the intellectual powers is the condition of admission to its honours; and although there are some in its lower departments, who form exceptions to the common rule, yet, as a general position, it may be safe to assume, that there is in this profession at least as much intellectual character, the result of study and assiduous preparation, united with as thorough an acquaintance with men and manners derived from intercourse with the world, as is to be found in any other class of our society.

But on questions concerning the influence of wealth, if it should be brought to bear on any of the other essential interests of the state, what reliance could an aristocracy place on the assistance of the bar? This very intelligence would make them, in any future time of like need, what they were in the revolution—the advanced guards of liberty, sentinels on the watch-towers of freedom, determined and inflexible supporters of public and personal rights, by the forms of the Constitution, so long as it was to be defended by argument—and when the time for discussion had passed, then with the illustrious members of this and other professions, who proclaimed the independence of their country, ready to pledge to its welfare, "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honours."

The medical profession is certainly not eminently the walk of rich men. It presents little chance for those

bold speculations, which, in their fortunate results, are the sources of affluence. It confines its attentive professors to a quiet, retired, and private circle of duties, little connected with the bustle and business of the moving and active world. It has other thoughts and other feelings for its daily conversation—other and deeper tones of sentiment, that sound the utter feebleness of all the wealth of worlds to give happiness or peace. The medical man, who has the confidence of society in his professional skill, has a mind too much occupied with the distresses of his fellow-beings, is drawn too constantly into the chamber of disease, is a witness too often of disappointments, which the feebleness and frailties of life interpose between hope and enjoyment, to be in any respect a money-making man. His professional emoluments may be large. They are justly so, if they can in any degree repay that anxiety and interest, which throw on him no small part of the agony he may be unable to alleviate; or if they would reward that deep solicitude and care with which he ministers to a family diseased. But professional fees, even at the close of a long and very active life, hardly compare with the profits of one fortunate voyage, or the successful operations of a single day on the exchange. If wealth comes to the medical man by the accumulation of his daily gains, it comes only when the desire of using it to any personal advantage has passed away, and its great end is to portion off a daughter, or aid a son in that education which may lay the foundation of his usefulness in society.

But the medical profession, like that of law, is crowded with ardent competitors. The success, which may enable a man to accumulate a fortune, is rare. It is the result of accident, which unfrequently occurs, or of great talents and sagacity, which very few possess. Most men are contented with a competency, and many fail of acquiring even that. As an intellectual, and thus a very useful class of a community, medical men are entitled to high respect and esteem. As a class indispensable to the preservation of the greatest of human blessings, they are invaluable. As a generous, liberal, disinterested class, forward to render their aid in chari-

table and beneficent operations, where benevolence or humanity can be promoted or suffering can be relieved, they are in this country eminently entitled to the gratitude of their fellow-citizens. But, as a wealthy class, able if they were willing, or willing if they were able, to do any thing for the support of a monied aristocracy, or to give any assistance to any scheme adverse to popular rights, the medical men of the United States, are of all others the most distant from any possible suspicion.

Of clergymen, it may hardly be necessary to speak in this connexion—men they are known to be

> "———— to all the country dear,
> And passing rich *with twenty pounds a-year*."

Among the mechanics of our country, there are rich men. The same good judgment and good fortune, which have in other professions crowned individuals, have here also been rewarded with similar results; and a youth of labour has been followed by an age of ease. But with them, too, the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Attend a meeting of those hardy citizens, and you will find every variety of condition, as regards the prosperity of their personal affairs, without being able to distinguish the causes of the difference. In the great lottery of their occupation, there have been more blanks than prizes; and it is not easy to see by what other cause, than that we call chance, the highest prizes have been drawn. This is eminently the working class, and the influence of the whole on the political machinery of our society, as we have already remarked, is as great as it is obvious. In our elective republics, a mechanic who has talents, and leisure for their employment, is invariably invited to take part in the public councils, as often as it is his turn in the crowd of similar competitors, and commonly with some preference in this respect in his favour. We say talents and leisure, because both are necessary for the service of the public in any of the departments of office. Talents, to a certain extent, are indispensable. We do not mean the mere art of public speaking, but that acquirement of facts, and ability to marshal and understand them, which are not less necessary in the halls of legislation than in

the workshop of the artizan, and give pre-eminence and distinction to the individual who possesses them in the greatest degree, whether in the one place or the other. We say also leisure, because the public business, no more than an individual's, can be carried on without large demands on individuals' time, and requires preparation and assiduity in research, as surely as care and correctness in execution. Some preliminary study must be devoted to the business of legislation, as certainly as to ship-building, or sail-making. A man would make a poor figure at the anvil, who, never having before been in a blacksmith's shop, should undertake to make a horse-shoe; and he would not have better success if he undertook, in like ignorance, to draw a statute of the State, or an ordinance of the City. In our free governments, however, where education is so universally diffused, most men are instructed in the principles of government, and in the mode of making, administering, and amending laws. It is this education which is to elevate and advance the labouring classes. This enlargement of mind, this cultivation of the intellectual powers, will carry with it, everywhere, its corresponding influence and weight, and, as far as it goes, will wear down and obliterate all other distinctions in society.

But while the mechanic and working classes are rising in power by intellectual cultivation, it is not to be supposed that the other classes of the community will go to sleep, or stand till even, and be overtaken, in this march of mind. The impulse is a general one. The force applied is universal, and the results will be everywhere apparent. Its tendency will be to render more plain, practical, and simple all the political and conventional arrangements of society; to place in broader view the great end of human existence, and multiply and facilitate the means by which that end can be attained; to make that contest, which first begins in regard to talents and intellectual power, a more honourable competition of individual virtue and moral worth; to enlarge the benevolence of mankind, extend the charities of life, soften the violence of passion, and thus increase the harmony of human existence.

It has seemed to us, however, that the true elevation of the working classes is to be effected, rather by a respect for their own condition than a jealousy of any other; by a pride in their situation in the community, and not any such fractious complaining as shows a dissatisfaction with it, without the possibility of a change. While the wants of society require labourers, such labourers, whatever the branch of labour may be, will of necessity be found; and the respectability and influence of this number are to be maintained, not by escaping from its duties, but by performing them in an exemplary and creditable manner. The mechanic who abandons his trade for the engagements of traffic, does not thereby become a better man; nor does the mechanic's son, who quits the employment of his father, do any thing to give respectability to his father's profession.

We are not to be misunderstood, as saying that trade or employments should be hereditary. Nothing is more opposite to the sentiments we would inculcate. Let every man pursue his own free course for honour or wealth. Let every man seek as he may, by all honest means, to better his fortune. The question we have to ask, is, whether to better a man's prospects in society, it is necessary to leave the employment in which his parents have been engaged with honour and success, and try a new plan for himself at the bar, in the pulpit, or the counting-house. The question we propose is, whether they who practically undervalue the mechanic arts, by leaving the pursuit of them as soon as they acquire the means—sending one son to college, another to a store, and another, it may be, to sea—do not themselves do something to diminish the respectability of an employment, which they thus act as if they were ashamed of, and seem to think they elevate their children by teaching them to avoid.

It is impossible, in our free and liberal forms of government, that respectability should depend on the mode of life, which, among the vast variety of human pursuits, a man has selected for himself. How a man's duty is performed, is the true subject of inquiry. Real respectability is undoubtedly as great, when the moral and intel-

lectual faculties are employed at the bench of the artizan, as in the forum or at the merchant's desk. But public opinion may be influenced by general conduct. If a man, with the energy of a parent's love, insists that to promote his son's interest, he will not permit him to follow his own employment, what is such conduct but the most effectual of all modes of declaring, that there are other avocations more respectable and desirable than his own? That something of this kind has occurred here, is too obvious to require any illustration. Men of most industrious habits have used the success which has crowned their efforts, not in continuing them with the accumulated impulse of experience and practice, and the aid of good judgment and long observation, but in making an effort at excellence and for their children, in other professions, sometimes indeed with like favourable results, and sometimes with a failure as lamentable as it is severe. It is to the opinion that any other class of men are more respectable than themselves, which more than any other class, the mechanics have themselves encouraged and maintained, that all the causes of complaint are attributable. So long as any other class or employment *is* more respectable, most certainly it is to be opened to the competition of every man, to whatever portion of the community he may belong. So long as it is *thought* to be more respectable, it should be sought for and adventured on and occupied, by any and every competitor, who may be able to acquire the means of honourably filling it. But why should it be deemed superior? By no innate or natural cause, by no inevitable state of things, but by that public opinion, which they do most to create and assuredly influence, who show their dissatisfaction by removing their children from particular employments as speedily as they can.

If, however, there is not any class in the community, which can properly be called a rich class, is there, it may be asked, any common principle of combination, which takes the affluent from all classes, and unites them in concert and in uniform phalanx, for the preservation or promotion of their peculiar interests, whether separate from their fellow-citizens, or otherwise? This is pro-

bably supposed to be the case. Wealth produces certain feelings, habits, and associations, which must, of course, be peculiar to itself. So does health, learning, pleasure, business, any occupation, indeed, or employment, in which the happiness of individuals is concerned, or about which their faculties are exerted. The gregarious character of mankind brings them together, and the association, to be useful, must be composed of similar materials. The innocent, and even laudable pleasures of the rich, cannot by possibility be enjoyed but in company with others, having, if not equal, yet like means for the same pursuits. The intercourse of the learned, or the associations of the gay, like those of the young, are governed by the same principles; but they are not an exclusive and cold abstraction from all that are dissimilar, nor a retreat from everything that has not the same profound thought, or the same buoyant spirits with itself. Each maintains a general regard to all, and a familiar acquaintance with some; but he will preserve a more intimate and cordial and interesting connexion with his own particular friends. If this be wrong, it is an error which seems to be inherent in the very nature of man, and to be as justly chargeable on one class of men as another.

If the conduct of individuals or classes extends beyond this, it is undoubtedly censurable. The world offers no vainer spectacle, and our society none more contemptible, than a man proud of his fortune. A haughty and supercilious demeanour, vaunting itself on the possession of extraordinary wealth, which may have been gotten without merit, as it may be lost without blame, is a poor and pitiful exhibition of folly, that merits the contempt it is sure to incur. There may be such instances here, but we think they are too rare, and meet too invariably the censure they deserve, to be in any respect an excuse for ill feelings towards the affluent. The general tone of our society is too uniform, the elevation of the highest is too little above the common level, the strong voice of public opinion is too powerful and impressive, to allow of that irritating and impertinent self-sufficiency, which cannot be exhibited without

exciting very general disgust. The affluent do not rise, and do not feel that they rise, into any independence of their fellow-men. They are as dependent on their good offices, on their labour, service, attention, and care, as if they were not able to pay for it. They can *command* nothing. There are no slaves here to be under the despotism of their pride; there are no classes so subordinate as to be compelled to labour for them but as their inclination directs. The rich can get nothing that they do not purchase; and they can buy nothing, if they accompany their intended purchase with that aristocratic insolence, which offends the proud feelings of their equals in every thing but gold. A lofty spirit of freedom pervades all classes of our happy community. There is an atmosphere, under our equal constitution, which brings vigour of mind and consciousness of personal dignity to all who respire it. With the many who breathe this air, the comparatively few rich men are brought daily into contact; and it serves to repress all lordly sentiments of superiority, and makes man "mild and sociable to man."

The affluent are perhaps inclined, by the impulse of personal interest, to a strong regard for the preservation of property. Hence those parts of our civil policy, which strengthen the security of titles, and establish the public faith, may expect them for their particular advocates. No man, it has been remarked, would desire a distribution of all the property of the people, unless he expected his share on a new division would be greater than what he now possessed. But this desire to make permanent and immoveable the landmarks of personal rights, if it be ascribed to one class more than another, is most of all advantageous to men of moderate property. What would they have as a reward for the toils of labour, the habits of long industry, the sacrifices and self-restraint, which have accumulated a little fund to meet the storms of misfortune, the infirmities of age, the weakness of a dependent offspring, and the solace of a bereaved family, but for the perfect reliance they can place on the protection secured to them by public law? Thank Heaven, we know of no spirit so profligate and

base in our community, as to wish to disturb this security; and if a strong attachment to the preservation of it is the worst thing that can be ascribed to those who have the largest stake in its premanency, they certainly will not be the least deserving members of the state.

The protection of property may however be extended too far, by provisions of law; and in our opinion it is carried too far, when the law authorises the imprisonment of an honest debtor, because he is unable to perform a contract he has made. To the whole form and body of such laws, we, as individuals, are heartily and entirely opposed. They are the relics of a barbarous age, and we trust to see them expunged from our statute books. But we do not think their continuance is owing to rich men, or that such men are much in the habit of resorting to their provisions. The enforcement of them is mostly sought by small dealers and petty chapmen, by men generally as poor as their debtors, and often with less feeling. The records of our prisons show, that executions are extended, for the most part, on the persons of debtors for small sums, and that the costs of imprisonment equals, on the whole, the amount of the debt.

Of the liberality with which the wealth of this community is poured out for all purposes of education or charity, no one can be ignorant, who sees the schools and the hospitals it has endowed, and the profusion of its bounties wherever good is attainable, or evil may be averted. A distinguished citizen* has lately recorded his unimpeachable testimony to this honourable fact. "It is obviously impracticable," he says, "to give any just idea of the amount of these charities. They flow from virtues which seek the shade, and shun record. They are silent and secret out-wellings of grateful hearts, desirous unostentatiously to acknowledge the bounty of Heaven in their prosperity and abundance. The result of inquiries, necessarily imperfect, however, authorise the statement, that, in the records of societies having for their objects either learning or some public

* President Quincy, in his Centennial Discourse, p. 44.

charity, or in documents in the hands of individuals relative to contributions for the relief of suffering, or the patronage of distinguished merit or talent, there exists evidence of the liberality of the citizens of this metropolis, and that chiefly within the last thirty years, of an amount, by voluntary donation or bequest, exceeding one million and eight hundred thousand dollars (£405,000). Far short as this sum falls of the real amount obtained within that period from the liberality of our citizens, it is yet enough to make evident, that the best spirit of the institutions of our ancestors survives in the hearts, and is exhibited in the lives, of the citizens of Boston; inspiring love of country and duty; stimulating to the active virtues of benevolence and charity; exciting wealth and power to their best exercises; counteracting what is selfish in our nature; and elevating the moral and social virtues to wise sacrifices and noble energies."

Whence, then, did these vast sums come? Where are the fountains of these flowing and fertilising streams? Surely, wealth can be given only by those who possess it. The best feelings, the kind sympathies, the finer affections of our nature, in numberless cases more beneficent than the treasury of an empire, are supplied by generous hearts, whose goodness may be a compensation for their poverty; but money comes in large masses only from the coffers of the rich.

We do not believe, then, that there is, or ever can be, under our free institutions, any thing justly imputed to them, so derogatory to their character, as the fostering of a monied aristocracy; nor that wealth acquired, as it may be, by accident or skill, can ever be applied either to the destruction of the private rights of any set of men, or to the detriment of the public.

It seems to us a little singular, that such a supposition should be made and pursued in the regular progress of theoretical inquiry, without in the slightest degree influencing the conduct of those who entertain it. The desire of acquiring property is the great lever of society. It moves, governs, directs, influences every thing about which the arts of life are employed, and all with which human beings are connected. High and low, rich and

poor, learned and ignorant, are under the strong impulse with which it acts upon every possible combination of the materials of society. That it is sometimes inordinate, is undoubtedly true. It is grasping, mean, overbearing, and penurious. These are its evils. But it is the spirit of industry and enterprise, of assiduity and forecast, of genius and learning, of patience and perseverance—these are its advantages. Man is so constituted, that he must have some motive of action that shall be serviceable to himself, and stimulate the labour that it rewards. There are other motives, indeed, some of which are grander and nobler; but there are none so universal, so constant, so irresistible; none on which the every day business of life so necessarily turns. It cannot therefore be in itself a wrong motive, but, like the affections and appetites, in themselves proper, requires only to be properly directed and controlled. Success in the great struggle in which all are engaged, should not, therefore, become the cause of envy, jealousy, or ill will, but should be encouraged either for the talent which it indicates, or the good it may accomplish. Least of all should the working classes allow any animosity to cross their minds; for the obligations of the labourer and the employer are reciprocal, and both are equally benefited when the former is engaged.

We have spoken of the working classes in this connexion, as the phrase is beginning to be used here, meaning thereby the operatives in the great work-shop of society. But however exact the term may be in European nations, or elsewhere in the world, the distinction intended to be conveyed by it, is perfectly arbitrary, and, according to our notion, absurd, when applied to the population of an American commonwealth. Every man, or almost every man, is a working man, unless he has grown old in labour, and seeks the necessary repose of exhausted nature. There are two reasons for this. First, the fact that our people begin life under a necessity of working for their own living; and secondly, the strong force of public opinion, which deprives a man of all personal consequence, and almost of all personal respectability, who, at a period of life when his faculties

are vigorous and capable of action, contributes nothi to the general welfare of the community.

The age of man here does sometimes enable a s cessful citizen to acquire a splendid fortune; but if an the uncertainties of all sublunary affairs, it is kept one great mass till he dies, the statute of distributi the true republican leveller of all aristocratic establi ments, invariably breaks it into fragments, and lea the possessor of any one part to the casualties of affa by which it is to be enlarged or diminished. Few f tunes are large enough to enable the inheritor of a p to fold up his hands, and rest contentedly on his weal To maintain the habits of his earlier years, when made part of the family circle of his affluent parent, must add to his possessions, and begin to labour, if n for subsistence, at least for the elevation to which has been accustomed. It is, after all, a chance if succeeds; for fortune, with her proverbial infidelity, rarely constant to these family worshippers.

There is, we think, a most happy coincidence in t interests of all the different classes of our community. public and political rights there is perfect equality. the exercise of those rights there should be a liberali of sentiment and feeling that may serve for the gua antee of their continuance. The harmony of our i stitutions is the best evidence of their happy adjustmen In the desolation of other countries which despotis grinds or revolution ravages, we have a picture of t miseries which jarring interests may produce. No such can occur here, if we wisely estimate our adva tages, and endeavour to sustain the causes from whic they spring. There is not among us any class which not affected by whatever interests either of the other Mr. Buckingham has well expressed his opinion, whe it cannot fail of effect. "In our republic," he says, "th distinctions of higher and lower in reference to privileg employment, and rank, are unknown." A distinguishe jurist,* adverting to the same subject, has beautifull illustrated the utter insignificance of wealth as a di

* Judge Story's Speech in Mass. Convention of 1820, pag 136 of Journal.

tinctive feature of our political system. "Property," he says, "is divided quite as fast as it accumulates. No family can, without its own exertions, stand erect for a long time under our statute of descents and distributions, the only true and legitimate agrarian law. It silently and quietly dissolves the mass heaped up by the toil and diligence of a long life of enterprise and industry. Property is continually changing like the waves of the sea. One wave rises, and is soon swallowed up in the vast abyss, and is seen no more. Another rises, and having reached its destined limits, falls gently away, and is succeeded by yet another, which, in its turn, breaks, and dies silently away on the shore. The richest man among us may be brought down to the humblest level; and the poor man while he rocks his infant on his knee, may justly indulge the consolation, that if he possesses talents and virtue, there is no office beyond the reach of his honourable ambition. It is a mistaken theory, that government is organised for one object only. It is organised for the protection of life, liberty, and property, and all the comforts of society—to enable us to indulge in our domestic affections, and quietly to enjoy our homes and firesides."

This is true philosophy. This is the exact estimate to be made of the beautiful theory of our republic. But the very want of a permanent and immoveable class, seems to the statesmen of Europe to be the defect of our institutions. There is no rock, they say, to which the ship can be moored; nothing to prevent the wild surges of public opinion from sweeping it from the shore, and exposing it to all the tempests of an angry ocean. It is so. THERE IS NONE. We depend not for security on any resistance to this opinion, but from the correctness of a public sentiment that can need no resistance. So long as our people are well informed and intelligent, there is no danger. The little occasional variations of the public mind are temporary flaws in the wind, that do no serious injury. But let us take care of the courses on which it blows. We have no force but principle, no other national guards than the moral feelings of the people, no standing army but the power of enlightened

mind, no police but the civic virtues of free citizens. Everywhere, good affections, generous and noble sentiments, disinterested and patriotic purposes, contribute essentially to the public welfare; but here, without them society would be dissolved. Jealousy between different portions of our citizens, suspicions of unfair designs, imputation of unwarrantable motives without justifiable cause, gradually undermine the foundations of our national existence. If there be cause, the destruction would be inevitable. The corollary we would draw, then, from these demonstrations, is the duty of encouraging a high, honourable, and generous course of conduct. Conciliation and kindness are to be inculcated on the one part; forbearance, confidence, and esteem on the other. These qualities are the cement of a republic.

From the course of our remarks, the practical results we would inculcate cannot fail to be perceived. The first we particularly attend to, is the duty of endeavouring to make men happy in that condition which Providence has assigned to them. What can be more miserable than a restless, dissatisfied, repining, and irritable temper, ill at ease with itself, and impotently envious of all around it? If there are causes of complaint, this disposition aggravates them; if they are few, it multiplies; and if there are none existing, it contrives to make them. It would be difficult to persuade a man in this country that wealth did not bring happiness, or that any substitute could be found to compensate for the absence of it. But, without denying its importance, it may be easily demonstrated that in itself it is neither the cause of happiness, nor the means of it. A certain portion of property is unquestionably necessary for the enjoyment of life; but this certain portion is no definite or certain quantity. It was described by an eminent merchant, who had the reputation of possessing a larger fortune than any other man in Massachusetts, to be *a little more than one had.* Now, that little more is just as deficient in the coffers of the most wealthy, as of any other individual. It is only a *little* more. Habits, modes of life, customary pursuits, are all regulated, not by any precise amount which a man has, or thinks he may ac-

quire, but by his relative condition in the great scale of society, in which perhaps no two individuals are precisely the same.

We do not attempt the folly of persuading our readers, that wealth is not a good thing; and, whatever our own reflections may be, we will essay no such unprofitable task as an argument against the opinion, that the more a man has the better for him and his children. Be it so. But inasmuch as all men cannot be rich, by the unavoidable and immutable laws of human existence, and because a society in which every man had an unlimited amount of gold, would be precisely the same as one where they were all equally destitute of it; and because, in fine, there must be pecuniary inequality, so that in the various departments of life,

"All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace,"

it is the most useful inquiry to make, how self-satisfaction may be best preserved among those who happen to be on the shady side of the field. Undoubtedly, if they were not permitted to adventure at their will for another and a better condition, the laws or institutions which should so confine them, would deserve their indignation, and ought to be forthwith overturned. But here, most truly, is no impassable line. Here are no stern laws, no prescriptive customs, nor restraints imposed by power or influence. The roads are all open and the travel all free. It is impossible to make them more so, and equally impossible that every man should advance with equal speed. The compensations which are enjoyed by those who are not forward in the course, should be wisely, temperately, and candidly considered, that, if they do not amount to a complete satisfaction, their value, as far as they go, may not be misunderstood. He does no service to any classes of men in our society, who excites their ill-will, or their bad feelings, or aggravates unavoidable evils by factitious and idle complaints.

A further inquiry, which our subject presents, is, how the various individuals of our mixed society can be most useful to each other; how that benignant and humane spirit, without which the intercourse of men would lose

its choicest satisfaction, may be best cultivated and enlarged, and made most extensively to operate. And we answer unhesitatingly, not by arraying one part of the community against another. The hands cannot say to the head, I have no need of thee; nor the head to the foot, I have no need of thee. Society moves on for the prospering of its own great concern—the common and best interests of all the individuals who compose it —by a happy and harmonious co-operation of joint efforts, each member acting according to his strength, his means, and his influence. Real difficulties it is proper to ascertain, and, if possible, to remedy. Real grievances are to be redressed; but the suggestions of a contrary interest in the different classes of society, may be suspected to be the fruit of an evil design. Such contradiction cannot exist in any permanent form. We have all one great and common interest as citizens, patriots, Christians; a common country to be served by united exertions, and a common faith to be maintained by the cultivation of character, which takes none of its colouring from the accidents of life. He has most to do, who has most power to do it. To whom much has been given, from him much will be required. Let him fulfil the obligations of his station, and meet the responsibility which it imposes. Providence seems constantly to indicate to us, that there are higher and nobler objects of pursuit than mere external condition. We are reminded that the cultivation of the mind, the improvement of the heart, the enlarging and purifying and extending the intellectual and moral powers of our nature, deserve the most serious regard. What a man does to multiply his acquisitions, will be much less a subject of concern to him, than how he has used them; and what he may have done for himself, of vastly less consequence in the great day of account, than what he has attempted for the interest of his fellow-men. What may be obtained of this world's goods, is as transient as is every thing connected with sublunary concerns; but accessions to mind, contributions to the generous and noble affections of our nature, are as durable as the soul, and will survive the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

A LECTURE on the WORKING MEN'S PARTY, delivered Oct. 6, 1830, before the Charlestown Lyceum, by Edward Everett, Boston.

Mr. TUCKERMAN'S Second Semi-Annual REPORT of the Fourth Year of his service as Domestic Missionary, Boston.

THE popular governments under which we esteem ourselves fortunate to live, depend for their success in promoting the prosperity of the state and the nation, on the truth of the axiom, that there can be no permanent diversity of interest between any classes of the people. Identity of interest, for all large and general purposes, is taken for true in the theory of our republic: and if it be not true, if there be serious and conflicting interests, which different classes maintain, irreconcileable with any common course of policy in which all may unite, it is not difficult to foresee what must be the tendency of this grand experiment of freedom. And in a government so entirely depending on popular opinion, it is scarcely less necessary that no such diversity of interest should be supposed to exist, than that none should in fact exist; for here, certainly, the sentiment of the poet is no fiction, that "there is nothing good or bad but *thinking* makes it so."

We may be excused, therefore, for resuming the subject to which we paid some attention in our last number; and we place at the head of this article two productions having a direct bearing upon it. The first, is a striking and beautiful illustration of the mysterious connexion of body and mind, and the necessary union of physical and intellectual power for all the avocations of life.

It bears the impress of genius, and like all the productions of its classic author, is calculated to instruct and improve its readers. We invite to it the early attention of all who feel any interest in this popular subject. The other, refers to the actual state and condition of a large and growing class of the community; those who, by ignorance, poverty, or crime, hang with heavy weight on society. The details which it presents, and the suggestions which are made by its philanthropic and intelligent author, are deserving of very careful regard.

In directing our attention, as we did in our former article, in the first instance to the class of affluent men, it was not by any means from a belief that they were the most important or deserving class of society. But as gain is the great object and the moving impulse of a labouring and active community, it seemed to be proper to inquire, who were most forward in the chace, and whether there was any congregation of individuals, who might possess the spirit of a class, distinguished by selfish objects, in which their fellow-citizens had no part.

We suppose that wealth, in our community, can very rarely be the harvest of rapacity or crime; and we are not willing to believe that it can in general be fairly considered to be gathered from exactions on the poor. It is sometimes said, that the luxuries of the rich are paid for by the poor. But is it so? Where the public treasury, which is mostly supplied by contributions of the industrious classes, pours out its abundance in pensions, sinecures, and salaries, enormously disproportioned to the services for which they are paid, the assertion might be justified. But here there is no such prodigality. Public office rarely makes any man rich. If the compensation paid to the servants of the state is in any case excessive, it is nevertheless fixed by the people, and at their pleasure may be curtailed. Great competition exists to enlist in that service. But rank, power, and honour, form no small part of the inducement, and the emolument is sought for, not so much to accumulate a fortune, as to sustain life.

We do not of course mean to include every individual case in our general remarks. There are exceptions in

this as in other rules. But if, as a general assertion, it may be safe to say, that the acquisition of fortune does not imply any thing at variance with the common good, how is it in the expenditure? Here, again, there are great differences in individual cases. But we can deal with the subject only as it presents itself on the whole. We can examine it only in its broad and general outlines, and in its indications of general character. It has such a character, as distinctive and well defined as the national character of which here and everywhere it makes a very considerable part. Of diffusion of wealth by charity or enterprise, it is not necessary to say any thing. To the former we have already adverted, and the latter is seen in the vast establishments of commerce, the magnificent edifices of manufacturing industry, the roads, canals, wharfs, stores, and public edifices, which contribute to the prosperity and ornament of our country. It is rather to humbler and narrower fields, that our inquiries now lead, because these, in want perhaps of more attractive ones, are made the more recent subject of animadversion. The personal enjoyments of the affluent are sometimes the causes of uneasiness, and offer occasions for expressions of slight regard. But the matter candidly considered, does not give much cause of complaint. What is luxury, but a tax which wealth pays to labour? What would be the condition of many of our most respectable and industrious citizens, if this tax were not very liberally levied and very willingly paid? A magnificent mansion, with its splendid display of costly decorations, ministers to the elegant indulgence of a single family, but its erection and maintenance give employment to an hundred. A style of living that is very apt to excite something of envy at the fortunate condition of the individual who supports it, gives to numerous classes of active men their principal means of subsistence. Even the gratifications, which, so far as the moralist may be concerned, are most objectionable, are not without their advantages in this respect. A ball-room, where the affluent and gay may assemble to pass, if not waste, as much time as would be equivalent to the life of one individual for a

month, or of thirty individuals for a day, can hardly be prepared for the reception of its pleasure-seeking inmates, without demanding from honest labour a much larger employment of time, which is liberally paid for; and when the indirect as well as the immediate demands which fashion makes for its display on these occasions, is taken into the account, it would be no extravagant estimate to place the employment of labour at the value of ten times the period employed in the indulgences of amusement. Strike from the list of accommodations, those which taste and luxury, and, if you please, pride and vanity, require, and what would be left to occupy the thousands who now live comfortably and contentedly by supplying them? When it is considered how intimately the diffusion of wealth is connected with all the departments of mechanical skill and labour, even those which at first view are most distant from it, the attempt would surely seem unwise, to excite ill-will towards any who may have the power of contributing to it. Under our forms of government, this attempt is peculiarly injudicious. In other countries, wealth places its possessors in a good measure above the power of the people. Rich men dread the exactions of magistrates, but hold popular feelings in very little respect. Not so here. So soon as the use of property brings them into disfavour, its use will be changed or discontinued. There is here no strength in a shield of gold to blunt the arrows of popular indignation. The people will be obeyed; and it is therefore the more important that their commands should promote their own essential interests.

We repeat, therefore, that there is an indissoluble connexion and mutual dependence among the classes of our society, and that the happiness of all, and in fact their existence, under free institutions, is mainly concerned in preserving a mutual confidence, respect, and esteem; so that it is a most unpatriotic, as well as unchristian effort, to attempt to separate these classes into opposite, conflicting, and irreconcileable parties.

Where this connexion to which we have alluded, is so direct and important, there may be other circumstances in addition to the general considerations of pro-

priety and duty, which may tend, in a greater or less degree, to unite or to sever the various individuals who compose our communities. These circumstances may be improved by care and attention, by suitable concessions of one set of men or another, and by the mutual co-operation of all. Some of these we proceed to consider, and to offer such suggestions as, in our opinion, may promote this important end.

Among the first of those institutions which tend to promote harmony among all the citizens of the commonwealth, are our public free schools. We do not so much allude now to the immense advantages of general education, which they, and they alone, are able to secure, as to the benefit of an early association of youth under our system, where there is a common object, and equal means of attaining it, and no superiority is possessed by any one that is not acquired by industry, talent, and virtue. On the perfect level of this broad platform, the children of rich and poor meet together, and forget the temporary inequalities of life, in exertions for the more durable elevations of mind. The strength of attachments formed at school, are rarely broken in the various vicissitudes of life; and the respect and esteem, which are generated in the friendly contests for intellectual distinction, bring down all overweening regard for the artificial difference of society.

We could not but smile at the utter ignorance of a recent traveller in our country, who undertook to become very wise in regard to our institutions and manners, when he spoke with disdain of these public schools, as partaking somewhat of an eleemosynary character.

Our people understand that what is given by the government, is only in another form a donation of their own. They are the government. Their property founded these establishments, their labour and contributions maintain them. The poorest child who receives the rudiments of his education in our public schools, feels the same consequence and pride that he would do if the master was a private tutor, paid from the pocket of his parent. It is his own. He claims it as his birthright. It is his inheritance as a citizen of New England, and

he knows no better or more honourable title by which the most affluent member of the community holds any portion of his wealth.

There seem to us to be two circumstances, which may tend to diminish the advantages of this beautiful system of republican policy, against which it is well to be on our guard. The first is, an attempt to discountenance those schools in which the highest branches of learning are taught, preparatory to a college education. The idea that these are only for the rich, is a libel on the capacity and talent of the middling and working classes. They are truly for those who have talents and genius to profit by the instruction; and such qualities are hereditary in no family, nor exclusively the characteristic of any classes of the community. It is, perhaps, the opposite extreme, to press the expenses of these public establishments to an extravagant and burdensome taxation. Whenever this shall be found to be the case, there will be danger of a revulsion in the public mind, hazardous to the system. The weight of public contributions are not borne by the rich, nor the poor. The last pay nothing; the first, though in single cases the amount is large, are yet too few in number to bring a very considerable proportion into the treasury. Most of the available funds of the public, are derived from the active, moving, busy men, who give life and energy to society; men who do not profess to have a fortune, and are nevertheless far above want; men who owe nothing beyond their means, and live well, but are yet subject to all the laws of economy and prudence. There is nothing which this useful and solid body of our citizens more cheerfully pay for, than the legitimate expenses of a sound, useful, practical education for all the children of the district in which they live: but there is nothing which we think they would more dislike, or ought more decidedly to resist, than the expending of time and money for the mere ornament and parade of learning, which must be too superficial to be valuable, and too foreign from the daily pursuits of life, ever to be of general practical utility.

The means of all societies have limits, beyond which

it is unreasonable and unwise, even for the success of a favourite object, to attempt to strain them; and the double, or perhaps opposite danger, arising from the necessity of schools for higher branches of learning, with reasonable regard to the amount of expense, requires some liberality of mind, and some concession of interest. The experiment of giving a complete and thorough education for all useful purposes, to every child of both sexes, at the public charge, is a bold, and certainly a novel experiment. To a certain extent the public is interested. That intelligence which the public requires, it should provide the means of obtaining, and probably this is the limit of its duty; but whether its duty is to provide for professional and business education, may admit of much doubt.

The other circumstance to which we allude, is the ancient habit of assembling all classes for public worship under one teacher in the same temple of the Lord. Religion, like death, dissolves all earthly distinctions. In the eye of Heaven there is no wealth but virtue, and no poverty but sin. At the altar of devotion there is generated a solemn sensibility to the weakness of a common nature, a regard for the professors of the same faith, and a sentiment of kindness for all who in like spirit are objects of the same divine dispensation. To the early habits of New England in this respect, is owing very much of that harmony and good will, and that reciprocal affection and esteem, which distinguished, not indeed the poor and the rich, for those classes hardly existed, but the more and the less favoured individuals of society, the happy and the unfortunate, the distinguished and the obscure, and united different professions and occupations of life, bringing together men, who, meeting but seldom in the course of daily avocations, might become aliens to each other, but for this weekly consecration of their feelings on the same solemn occasion.

Another obvious mode of promoting the harmony and common good of society, is by diminishing the number of that class which has nothing in common with the multitude: we mean the class of paupers, whether they

become so by misfortune or by crime. So long as a man has any stake in the general welfare, however small, he will readily understand that it is to be preserved on the same principles by which the larger interests of others are protected; but when he has none at all, there is no dependence to be placed on him. It then requires stronger moral principle to resist the force of temptation, which urges him to violate or abrogate the laws. If at any time it should be found that the physical power of the state was in the hands of those who had no advantage from the existing laws, and no hope of obtaining any, the result would speedily be revolution and civil war; or if, by the agency of such a class at the ballot boxes, the form of government might be changed, it is not easy to believe that there would be any permanency in its establishment. We see in Europe, what we trust never to see here, the maintenance of civil power by military force, and the frightful disorders and distress which are incident to despotism. To avoid it, there is a necessity of diminishing pauperism; and to diminish it, there is need of a prevailing spirit of industry, frugality, and integrity. The cause and the prevention of it, are subjects of deep interest to the statesman as well as the philanthropist; and the means of checking it, which Dr. Tuckerman has suggested in the report before us, are important enough to be very seriously and deliberately considered.

"At the hazard even of falling under the imputation of arrogancy, I am constrained to say, that the great error, as I think, of legislators and of political economists, has been, that they have looked upon man only, or almost exclusively, as a creature of time, and a subject of human government; almost alone as he is seen in the class in which he stands of his fellow beings; and forgetting, or lightly regarding, his moral nature, they have sought for the causes, and the remedy of evil in society, altogether in outward circumstances; and everywhere, but where alone these causes and remedies are to be found, in the elements, and springs, and capacities of that nature, which makes us what we are, *men*. It is indeed surprising that the poor, and that criminals under despotic governments, have been treated as beings of altogether a distinct nature from that of their rulers and oppressors. But it is wonderful, that, under a government in any measure elective and free, and under

the light of Protestant Christianity, a criminal code should have been retained till the 19th century, which was the disgrace of the 16th; and that it could ever have been hoped to have restrained the growth of poverty, under institutions which as effectually excluded the great mass of the poor from the means of intellectual improvement, as they would have been excluded by a law which forbade their instruction. It is wonderful that, in a Protestant country, and in the 19th century, the very means employed for the punishment of criminals, should be the means best suited, of all others, to produce an indefinite extension and aggravation of crime; and that there should have been annual assessments, to an immense amount, for the support of the poor, which from year to year have been most manifestly a bounty upon idleness, and a legislative provision for the progress of want, and misery, and sin. These are causes and effects, which should be well understood and seriously pondered in a young country; and especially in a country whose law is the will of the people, and whose institutions, of every character and name, rest on the will of the people, and whose only true greatness, and security, and happiness, is in the intelligence and virtue of the people. The truth is, that both political economists and legislators have too generally looked to *wealth* as the supreme good of a nation; and to the means of increasing wealth, as the means of national greatness and happiness. The working classes have therefore been regarded by them as is machinery, in relation alone to their productiveness of wealth. The question, therefore, respecting both the poor and criminals, has been, how are they to be disposed of at the smallest expense? This very course of procedure, I believe, has quadrupled the expenses which would have been required, if legislators and political economists had acted upon the doctrine, that a nation is truly great and powerful, only in the intelligence and the virtue of all the orders of its subjects. Let the wealth of a nation be a thousand times that of England, and let it be in the possession of the few, while the many are reared in ignorance and are left to be goaded by want, and, when they fall into crime, are treated in any way but that in which men should be treated, and the day will come, when all this wealth will not be sufficient to appease the passions of a blind and infuriated mob. Mr. Peel, in the same breath, speaks of 'the prosperity of the country,' and of what he calls 'the frightful difference,' in that country, 'between the increase of crime, and the increase of population.' I will only say, may God save our country from such prosperity as this!"

Dr. Tuckerman has modestly put this matter in a note; but it is, in our opinion, a part of his report that is worthy of grave consideration. Pauperism originates

in misfortune or crime; and, as it proceeds from one or other of these sources, it is, we think, to be treated with different applications. An almost universal spirit of enterprise, laudable efforts for commercial prosperity, and that general activity among our countrymen, which must incur hazard, as the only means of success, sometimes prove in the end so disastrous to many, that the whole prospect of future life is overwhelmed by one dark cloud of debt and embarrassment. We have already entered our protest against laws, which, under such circumstances, subject a man to imprisonment; but something beyond a melioration of their barbarous provisions is necessary, and we think a scheme for the full discharge of the honest debtor, through the process of a bankrupt law, is demanded by the universal interest of society, and cannot much longer be delayed with safety to our institutions.

But insolvency or pauperism from crime, is a matter of different complexion, even when it is not always the result of such actions as the laws of society can punish. There are men, unwilling to labour, who, because they are poor, preposterously enlist themselves under the banners of the working men. There are multitudes, who prefer the resorts of low dissipation and the indulgence of idle habits, to the exertion of those faculties of mind or body, by which subsistence could be honestly acquired, and over whom, if some strong public sentiment does not exercise a salutary severity, there should be enforced the moral guardianship of the laws. From this class, however, are sure to proceed the most noisy and constant clamours against all the requisitions of society, against all the restraints and impositions which public laws can place on the indulgence of their perverted minds. It is the evidence of a bad state of things, when their complaints are regarded. It is the mark of a decay of public principle, when they are countenanced and encouraged by the voice of men claiming to be good citizens. It is a worse symptom, when the magistracy is influenced by their obstreperousness, and laws are either not made or not enforced, which are calculated to restrain them. Public sentiment is the only power

that can keep the walls of the Constitution from their assault, and it ought to be watchful and severe. It should derive tone and vigour from the certainty which all good citizens ought to feel, that its strength and purity are our only protection.

It is not improbable, that, under the most popular forms of government, laws or customs may grow up, which in their operation may, in time, have a more injurious effect on one class of society than another. Such is the imperfection of every thing merely human, that these consequences may be expected. Such, it has been suggested, is actually the case in our free government, and we propose to pay some attention to those arrangements that have been enumerated as deserving of change; but it is a preliminary inquiry, What is the mode of redress, and who is to move it when such cases exist? To this question we unhesitatingly answer, that, in our own opinion, it is not to be done by the array of one class against another, as if one portion of citizens had an interest to carry by force, what another class of citizens had as strong an interest to oppose. Unless this opinion is correct, it seems to us, that we are wholly in a mistake as to the practicability or advantage of a republican government. Such a government begins with the axiom, that the interests of all its citizens are sufficiently identical to be moulded and harmonised into one mass. Power may enforce imposition. Despotism may make its own pleasure to be law. But republicanism supposes a common consent, and of course a mutual concession and spirit of compromise. The government of the people may be as arbitrary as the mandate of a monarch; and not the more agreeable because it proceeds from the dictation of many, instead of the command only of one. They who suffer may be fewer, but their suffering is not less.

The common good of all, *ex vi termini*, cannot be the exclusive and peculiar benefit of a part; but it is the common good of all which is to be pursued, and although it may be difficult, and perhaps impossible, so exactly to adjust the scales, as to weigh out to each his fair proportion, no party and no class of men can propose

not to make such an object their effort and desire, ' out in effect declaring that they choose their own trary government, instead of the liberal policy of a republic. Associations to accomplish some favo project, may not be objectionable, when their desi to reconcile such project with the common good; the danger of such associations, is the tendency have to exalt their own schemes into an artificial sequence, to stimulate the spirit of party to adv them, and to break down those essential guards w protect the rights of others, either through a careles which disregards them, or a recklessness that tran on them without regret. It would be a very extra nary and alarming thing, if the affluent classes of so openly associated to carry strong measures of their if, for instance, all the landholders, who, although affluent, would be pretty powerful, should combi relieve their property from taxation, or enhance rents; or if, at the other extreme, the idle, the wortl the criminal, and the dependent, forgetting any shades of difference among themselves, should form solid mass to move against the laws. It may not l strange, but it is quite as preposterous, to suppose, any section of the working class—which entire cla truth, includes everybody—could form a phalanx objects so hostile to any portion of the community, each portion would be bound to oppose them. such congregation must necessarily be subject to o other of the following remarks. Either the objects have in view are for the good of the whole people therefore all the people, properly understanding t would be bound to give them their aid; or, the essentially prejudicial to a part of the people, and t fore all, inasmuch as all are the common guardia every part, are equally bound to oppose them. In t there is no need of association. Let the cause of g ance be fairly and fully examined, it follows of certa that if it is well founded, there is a common intere having it redressed.

On the subject of education, which is one of the p put forward for examination, there may be differ

about the mode, but none as to the end; and in regard to imprisonment for debt, which is another, we have already expressed an opinion, which we hope at no distant day to find universal.

A less expensive law system is said to be a further desideratum, and we cordially concur in the sentiment. We do not indeed limit our wishes to a mere diminution of expense, but extend them to a thorough revision of the entire civil and criminal code. This code, if indeed its heterogeneous mass be entitled to the name, has its origin in a period of remote antiquity, among a people little better than barbarians, with no knowledge of commerce or the arts of polished society, in an age of poverty, ignorance, brutality, rapine, cruelty, and blood. Its materials sometimes flexible and plastic, and sometimes unbending, have been strained to every condition of society, government, and religion, in peace or war, through all the gradual changes which time and intelligence have elaborated; so that the principles which were adapted to the times of the Catholics and the supremacy of the Pope, were made to suit equally well the vacillating creed of Henry or the infidelity of Charles, and to flourish under Laud or Cranmer, the Pilgrims of New England, or the Quakers of Pennsylvania.

Such a monstrous fabric of error and folly in unintelligible Latin and barbarous French, would not have existed as a monument of laws for civilised people, if it had not contained some inherent capacity of change, so that what was law to-day, should, in the fluctuations of society, cease to be law to-morrow; and that principles either too barbarous or too ridiculous to be sustained under the light of reason and religion, should disappear, as ghosts are supposed to do, at the dawn of day. To accomplish this necessary change, two powers have concurred in the country in which this system has its origin, and have been copied in our own; the one is legislative enactment, and the other judicial construction. The Acts of the Parliament of Great Britain, have from time to time remodelled the provisions of law, and our legislatures have done the same, without changing or attempting to change its principles; so that it

resembles some of those ancient castles, which modern architecture has repaired and enlarged, or in part removed, without regarding either their symmetry or style, or anything beyond the temporary purposes for which the alteration was designed. The wisest lawyers have therefore been obliged to confess that they were unable to find their way through the labyrinths of the building, in which it is no wonder that an inexperienced stranger should be lost.

By judicial construction, or the opinion of successive judges for some hundred years, the doctrines of the law have been changed and re-changed, as the supposed purposes of substantial justice from time to time required; so that what was intended to be a system, became, in important respects, the mere individual judgment of a chancellor, a chief justice, or a majority of the bench. When this unwieldy and ill-adapted mass of materials was imported and erected in our country into a temple of the law, it was of necessity to be changed from the fabric suited to a monarchical, into one designed for a republican government. Directions were given to that effect, but the terms of these directions were so general, that an almost unlimited power was conferred on the judicial department, to receive and reject as they pleased. Of the singular pliability of this law, a memorable instance may be seen in a case decided by one of the most profound jurists of our country in the Circuit Court of the United States.* In the case of the United States *v.* La Jeune Eugenie, it was maintained by the counsel for the government, that the slave trade was contrary to the law of nations as at present understood and received, and that it was contrary to the law of nations, because it was a violation of the law of nature, which constituted a component part of the law of nations. The learned

* The proceedings in this case were on the admiralty side of the court, which does not necessarily proceed on the common law. This circumstance does not injure the effects of our illustration. Either in the same country there are two laws, one in opposition to the other—one of them being against the principles of the law of nature and nations—or they agree together, and therefore either of them sustains the opinion of the court.

judge, with as much moral power as legal learning, decided "that the slave trade is prohibited by universal law."—"In respect to the African slave trade," he forcibly remarks, "such as it has been described to be, and in fact is, in its origin, progress, and consummation, it cannot admit of a serious question that it is founded in a violation of some of the first principles which ought to govern nations. It is repugnant to the great principles of Christian duty, the dictates of natural religion, the obligations of good faith and morality, and the eternal maxims of social justice. When any trade can be truly said to have these ingredients, it is impossible that it can be consistent *with any system of law*, that purports to rest on the authority of reason or revelation; and it is sufficient to stamp any trade as interdicted by public law, when it can be justly affirmed that it is repugnant to the general principles of justice and humanity."

Any system of law! How long and arduously did the great men of England struggle to abolish it? How long ineffectually did they contend to prevent its being favoured, protected, encouraged by the common law of the land? Under the security of that law, four companies were chartered to deal in slaves, one with the name of the Royal African Company, to which the king, one of the princes of the blood royal, and many persons of high rank, were subscribers; and so lately as 1750, an Act was passed by the English Parliament, for extending and improving the trade to Africa. The decision in the American court was a wise one. We should have blushed for the character of our country, if it had been obligatory on the court, to pronounce any other decree. But the law changes, because it ought to change, after having encouraged for centuries all the atrocity and crime which have desolated Africa and disgraced mankind. The same eternal justice which made this a righteous decision when it was pronounced, existed in all its force when the law of England sanctioned the slave trade; and a judge, who had had the boldness, and the integrity, and the capaciousness of mind, to have uttered the sentiments of this eminent magistrate, might formerly have been brought to the block.

The monstrous absurdities which the common law has sanctioned, are not confined to great and impressive matters, like that which commands the attention of mankind; it descends to the humblest and smallest of the daily transactions of life, in which there is an amount of error and extravagance to be eradicated, as oppressive in its way, as that which related to the slave trade; and we are sometimes as much surprised at its unyielding and immoveable dogmas, as at others we are astonished by its changes.

We are desirous of fortifying our position by adverting to a case discussed in the Court of King's Bench in 1818, the doctrine and practice of which, as far as we know, form at the present moment a part of English common law.

Shortly before that period, Mary Ashford, a young woman of interesting and exemplary character, was found murdered, with evident marks of previous violence on her person. Strong suspicion existed against one Abraham Thornton, who was indicted as well for the murder, as for the other supposed capital felony, and on each charge was acquitted. In Easter term 1818, he was prosecuted, by appeal, for the same offences, at the suit of William Ashford, the eldest brother of the deceased unfortunate female, a slight and feeble young man, on whom the law devolved that extraordinary right. Thornton being put to answer the appeal, pleaded as follows: "Not guilty; and I am ready to defend the same by my body;" and thereupon taking his glove off, he threw it upon the floor of the court. Ashford replied that Thornton ought not to be admitted "to wage his battle," or in other words, to try the truth of the charges of murder and ravishment, by a personal contest with the brother of the deceased, because, he said, that there were violent and strong presumptions of Thornton's guilt, which, in a form of recital called a counterplea, he, Ashford, set forth at full length; and in such case, he contended, the wager of law or duel, was not allowed by the law of the land. After the proper answers were made by the defendant, the court gravely listened to learned and elaborate arguments, not to ascertain whe-

ther the law of the country permitted such savage mode of settling a cause, for that was admitted, but whether the case before them was, or was not, by its peculiar circumstances, a case to be excepted from the general rule. Lord Ellenborough said, "The cases which have been cited in this argument and the others to which we ourselves have referred, show very distinctly, that the general mode of trial by law, in case of appeal, is by battle, at the election of the appellee (the accused party), unless the case be brought within certain exceptions, as for instance, where the appellant is an infant, or a woman, or where the appellee is taken with the mainour (in the fact), or has broken prison. Now, in addition to all these, there is the case where great and violent presumptions of guilt exist against the appellee, which admit of no denial or proof to the contrary. Without going at length into the discussion of the circumstances disclosed in the counterplea and replication here, it is quite sufficient to say, that this case is not, like those in Bracton, one which admits of no denial or proof to the contrary. The consequence therefore must be, *that the usual and constitutional mode of trial* must take place, unless, indeed, in respect of the plaintiff's having by his counterplea declined the wager of battle, the judgment of the court must now be, that the defendant should go without day."

No part of these strange proceedings would be tolerated here; but the system to which they belong is our system, overlaid and lumbered with antiquated forms and innumerable precedents, that serve in a majority of instances to conceal the truth, or prevent the power of it from being exerted to any useful purpose, and reduce the trial of a matter of right to a question of superior adroitness among opposing counsel.

This system, then, should be reformed altogether, not by occasional and temporary palliatives, but by a profound, extensive, and radical change. Something has been done in this country, from time to time, to soften its harsh features, and humanise its form; and if, on a comparison between the common law as it has, until recently, existed in England and the United States, the

advance of improvement had not been eminently in our favour, it would not now be tolerated for a single day. But it is a just demand, by those on whom the weight and the expense of this cumbrous and dilapidated system hangs, that a complete and thorough investigation and repair should be immediately made. A late Edinburgh Review,* in discussing the condition of the common law, ventures to give the following description:—

"England, then, be it remembered, is a country, in which the first lawyers aver that no man but an idiot, or one who cares nothing for his own interest, would ever think of suing another for so small a sum as twenty, or even thirty pounds, in one kind of court, and for so little as a hundred in another; and where, if he were called on to pay such a sum a second time, by a creditor, whose stamped receipt he had in his pocket, having paid it to the same creditor an hour before, he would at once pay the money rather than gain a suit commenced against him by defending it!—England is a country, where, if a man be knocked down with injury and insult, he has but one substantial means of redress, putting his antagonist to death, for which he will be punished, though not capitally! —England is a country, where, if a man's character, or that of his wife, or his child, be slandered daily for a year, he cannot, without risking the bread he and they have to eat, have any remedy but assassinating the supposed defamer!—England is a country, where no secure conveyance can be made, at any expense, of almost any real property, and no conveyance at all of property under forty or fifty pounds!—England is a country, where, if there be left a legacy of a hundred pounds, the plain and obvious course for a prudent man to take, is to say nothing about the matter, and let the executor keep it instead of himself, unless he will voluntarily pay it over, which he is substantially under no kind of obligation to do!—England, moreover, is a country, which, by the common consent of almost all its own inhabitants, has no equal on the globe, for the excellence of her institutions; and of these the first and most excellent is her system of jurisprudence, which all who understand it extol to the heavens, as the most divine production of perfect wisdom—which all, who know it by experience of its blessings, curse as the worst mischief that ever proceeded from the infernal regions!"

We do not adopt this language. It is too extravagant and exaggerated even for the meridian of London, and

* No. CII. p. 482.

is too deeply coloured to suit any part of the United States. But we have no doubt the tendency, the constant and resistless tendency of the common law, is to produce this state of things and even worse than this; and the only reason why it has not, or will not, is, that the common law is every year modified by statutes that do something to correct its evils and promote the public advantage. But the difficulty is, that all the changes thus made are mere modifications, often temporary—generally arising from the immoderate pressure of a particular state of things, and not formed on those large and comprehensive principles by which statesmen and jurists should be governed in regard to the great interests of a nation. Of this kind of legislation we have had enough and too much in the United States; and in consequence, the wonder is, not that we have not gone along better, but that we have prospered so well. In this respect some States are in advance of others. The examples of New-York and Louisiana are particularly worthy of imitation, and it is very probable that a more thorough revision than was had by the former State, would multiply the benefits and reduce the inconveniences which are found in her revised laws.

The English statesmen are aware of the need there is, on their part, of extensive alterations, and are proceeding with ability and success in radical changes, which this country should lose no time to imitate. The criminal law was put in commission at least as early as 1824. Important reports have been made by the learned gentlemen employed on it, and these, during the present year, have been reprinted by order of the House of Lords. Sir Robert Peel's bills, in the meanwhile, have been passed, embracing several branches of the criminal law, and among others providing for cases of principal and accessory in capital felonies, for the want of which provisions in our code, so much embarrassment attended the recent prosecutions at Salem. We should follow the inquiries which the important amendments introduced by Sir Robert, and the interesting propositions already submitted by the commissioners, would suggest, did we not know with how little pleasure the details of

these concerns are listened to by general readers, who think, and perhaps truly, that they are the appropriate business of professional men. On such men we call with earnestness and solemnity. If our people adopt the fashions and fancies that are transmitted by the most rapid conveyances, and seize on the periodical and lighter literature of the English press, before it has circulated in its own metropolis, it surely does not become them to be indifferent to improvements in the science of domestic jurisprudence, involving not merely life and property, although these *are* in fact involved to immense amount, but the temporal and eternal happiness of the thousands, who, although the elegant and the fastidious never see them, have families to support, children to instruct, and souls to be saved.

On the civil side of the law a more tardy and less efficient reformation is perceptible, partly because inconveniencies affecting property, receive, as they are discovered, some remedy at the time, and partly, we feel bound to suppose, because of the strength and influence of those whom the abuses of the system maintain in opulence and dignity. The political condition of Great Britain has also retarded the progress of legislation. The whole energy of the country was for a long period directed to the prosecution of the mighty wars in which it was engaged, and it is only after the repose of peace, and in time of general tranquillity, that her great men can devote their minds to the Herculean task of reforming the system of her common law. But the subject has claimed some share of regard. On the seventh of February 1828, Mr. Brougham directed the attention of the House of Commons to the state of the common law courts, and of the common law itself. The speech, which he delivered on that occasion, occupied six hours, and made a most powerful impression on the House. It was unfortunate, we think, that it mingled certain feelings of hostility towards ministers with sound principles of honest duty to the country, and it diminished our expectations of its efficacy to find caustic expressions and severe censures, which would necessarily excite an animosity that it was unwise to provoke.

he consequence is, that although two commissions
ɜ established, one to inquire into the state of the
mon law at large, and the other to take into
ideration the state of the law of real property,
ı has yet been accomplished under those com-
ions, excepting the collecting and diffusing the in-
ation which must of course precede any intelligent
ɔn.

Vhether the eminent lawyer, who moved the inquiry,
ıme dissatisfied with the slow progress of the com-
ioners, we are not informed; but we find in the last
on of Parliament that he again took the matter into
ɔwn hands, and presented, with distinctness, the out-
ı of his plan of reform, limited however both in its
ciples and in the district of country to be subjected
ıem, with the view, no doubt, of avoiding the charge
ɑpracticability, which had formerly been urged upon
but intending to extend them, if, on experiment,
were found useful. The remedy proposed by Mr.
ıgham for the existing evils of the common law,
ıus described by a commentator. "He has gone
ɑce to the main body of the evil—the delay, the ex-
ıe and vexation of justice, as at present administered;
he has, boldly, it must be confessed, propounded
remedy by a very sweeping change in the present
ɜm. But it appears manifest that the change is of
ash and unheeding kind; for it is bottomed upon
safest principles; it leaves all the rest of the law
ıuched; it connects itself with the system without
ing it, and it has even a warrant of authority, not
in the minor analogies of that system, but in its
inal, we may say, its primeval arrangements. The
of the plan is shortly stated. It is to bring justice
e to every man's door, at all times of the year, by
establishment of local courts, and at the same time
ecure soundness of decision, and preserve perfect
ɔrmity of law, by giving the superintendence over
local judicatures to the central and general courts
Vestminster."—In casting our eyes over the one
lred and seven sections of this bill, we cannot but
k Mr. Brougham has examined and approved some

Americanisms,* which are perhaps more allowable in jurisconsults than philologists; but, although he has given no credit to us for anything which seems to have been borrowed, we are willing to allow him great praise for other manifest improvements, which, as far as we are informed, are entirely original. It is impracticable, within the limits to which we must confine ourselves, to give any analysis of those improvements; nor does our plan require it. We advert to this splendid effort of a most eminent man, to show, that essential alterations of the common law are desirable and practicable; and that a zealous and intelligent application to it, would be likely to overcome the prejudices by which the system is in a great measure defended. We cannot however forbear to express our conviction, that the most novel part of the new plan, which establishes courts of general jurisdiction by consent, and courts of arbitration and reconcilement, intended to shorten litigation, to accommodate differences, and *to prevent suits at law*, are especially worthy of American legislators. It is not to be supposed that the projected system, carefully as it has been prepared, is yet so perfect as it may be made, or that by our remarks we mean to express entire satisfaction with every part of it. Thus far it seems to be the production of a single mind, a generous and noble benefaction of individual talent for public good. Other minds will add their contributions, and new light will be thrown on the path of improvement. But enough

* We are glad to hear that a recent order has been received in this country from England for about one hundred volumes of American Reports. Notwithstanding the eagerness with which the decisions of the courts in Westminster Hall are cited here, it is rare indeed that our own decisions are even referred to in the King's Bench. A little more attention to them would satisfy the English judges, that they might learn something in exchange for the light they lend us on the intricate paths of the law; and the commissioners, whether on the civil or criminal department, for whose use we suppose the foregoing order was transmitted, will probably find there are some improvements in our administration of justice, which, if their pride will stoop to borrow them, may promote the interest of their country.

done to show the futility of the ready objection, that ıe common law, as a system, cannot be essentially ıanged in a country where it has been once estab-shed.

We have left ourselves no room to discuss the other reat subjects, which have been put forward by those 'ho assume to be exclusively the working class, as de-ɜrving of change; to wit, the militia, taxation, mono-olies, and the abrogation of all laws in regard to reli-ion:—important and interesting topics, deserving each f them a consideration by itself, and on which we may ossibly at some future time offer our reflections to our eaders. At present, however, we can do no more than ive our own answer to the inquiry we have already ıade—if all these matters require new modification, 'ho is to make it? And we say, they must make it 'ho understand the existing systems, and know how ınd where the remedy is to be applied. Who doubts he necessity of learning and talent and experience for his extensive work? Who would entrust so momentous . concern to any but the most enlightened, the most ıareful, the most prudent, and the most comprehensive ninds? They who suffer an evil are not always the nost competent to remove it. Any man may tell when ıis watch is out of order; but the artist who has studied ts machinery, is alone able to repair it. We may soon mough ascertain that our health is impaired, and know 'ery well that the body requires medicine; but he pro-ɜeeds very thoughtlessly who ventures in extreme cases o administer to himself. The constitution of the state, he health of the body politic, the movement of juridical nachinery, are not easier known, or managed with less ıicety of touch. They can be adjusted only by hands ıf competent skill. We ask not to what profession or rade the mover of reformation belongs; but it is our luty to inquire whether his talents are adequate to the ask, whether his education has given him the requisite nformation, and whether study and observation have ɜnabled him to acquire the necessary skill. It will be ıaid, perhaps, that honesty is as necessary as intellect, ınd that the most capable are the most adversely in-

terested, and cannot be depended upon. So it was said of Mr. Brougham, a scholar whose splendid talents are equalled only by the extent and range of his vast and various information, and whose information and talents combined are not more than equivalent to his political integrity;—a lawyer at the head of his profession, so constantly and lucratively and laboriously employed, that he could devote but one day to a canvass for a seat in Parliament, on which day, if the newspapers are to be believed, he travelled one hundred miles, and made eight public speeches to different assemblies of his electors;—a man who owes everything to his success in the profession to which he belongs, yet ready to take the lead in the grandest plans of improvement in education, in jurisprudence, in civil liberty, at whatever loss of personal emolument. But there is no loss to him, or men like him. Real intellectual greatness needs no aid from the abuses of antiquated systems. It derives none of its strength or vigour from the misfortunes and misery of its fellow-beings. It stands erect in its own might, by its own energy, and by the favour of that Providence which has given it inspiration. Suspicion, and envy, and jealous mistrust, are the vices of other minds, and they obstruct their own purposes. They prevent exertions, which men who have the power would most willingly make for the general good. They discourage effort by the imputation of bad motives. A better feeling must prevail, before any great improvement will be attempted; a more generous confidence must exist, before it can under any auspices be successful. Let such a temper prevail. Cultivate talents which are capable of great exertions. Cheer and encourage their exercise. Propose for their reward the gratitude that their merit is entitled to expect, and they will be found here, in these quiet departments of practical, unobtrusive utility, quite as abundant and as powerful, as when a nation's independence was to be declared in the hall of legislation, or her freedom to be maintained at the head of her armies.

Our remarks, it will be seen, proceed on the supposition that society is to be maintained on its present basis.

The revolution, which atheism or infidelity would introduce, requires different considerations and another style of argument—if indeed argument could properly be addressed to the fool who says in his heart there is no God. They who believe, or affect to believe, in the fortuitous creation of material and intelligent existence, who scoff at the idea of human accountability, who consider all law as injustice, all exclusive property as usurpation on common rights, and all family and domestic associations as absurd and unnatural, are to be dealt with, if at all, with different considerations. Such extravagance carries its own refutation in the innate character of man, and is put down by the power of all those affections and sympathies and kind feelings, which education developes, in various degrees, but universally and invariably. The human mind, like a field, will, even under the best cultivation, produce tares as well as wheat. Such opinions are the rank growth of a soil, which is to be weeded, as well as tilled. They are stubble quickly consumed, while the fruit that is ripened by intelligence and truth, is gathered and preserved for the nourishment of the soul.

THE IMPORTANCE AND MEANS

OF

A NATIONAL LITERATURE.

REVIEW of a Discourse concerning the INFLUENCE of AMERICA on the MIND; being the Annual Oration delivered before the American Philosophical Society, at the University in Philadelphia, October 18, 1823.—By C. J. Ingersoll.

WE shall use the work prefixed to this article, as ministers are sometimes said to use their texts. We shall make it a point to start from, not the subject of ›ur remarks. Our purpose is to treat of the importance ınd means of a National Literature. The topic seems › us a great one, and to have intimate connexions with ›orals and religion, as well as with all our public inter- ts. Our views will be given with great freedom, and they serve no other purpose than to recommend the ›ject to more general attention, one of our principal ·ects will be accomplished.

We begin with stating what we mean by national ·ature. We mean the expression of a nation's mind ·riting. We mean the production among a people of ›rtant works in philosophy, and in the departments ıagination and taste. We mean the contributions ›w truths to the stock of human knowledge. We the thoughts of profound and original minds, ela- ›d by the toil of composition, and fixed and made ·tal in books. We mean the manifestation of a 's intellect in the only forms by which it can mul- self at home, and send itself abroad. We mean nation shall take a place, by its authors, among

the lights of the world. It will be seen, that we include under literature all the writings of superior minds, be the subjects what they may. We are aware that the term is often confined to compositions which relate to human nature, and human life: that it is not generally extended to physical science; that mind, not matter, is regarded as its main subject and sphere. But the worlds of matter and mind are too intimately connected to admit of exact partition. All the objects of human thought flow into one another. Moral and physical truths have many bonds and analogies, and whilst the former are the chosen and noblest themes of literature, we are not anxious to divorce them from the latter, or to shut them up in a separate department. The expression of superior mind in writing, we regard then, as a nation's literature. We regard its gifted men, whether devoted to the exact sciences, to mental and ethical philosophy, to history and legislation, or to fiction and poetry, as forming a noble intellectual brotherhood, and it is for the purpose of quickening all to join their labours for the public good, that we offer the present plea in behalf of a national literature.

To show the importance which we attach to the subject, we begin with some remarks on what we deem the distinction which a nation should most earnestly covet. We believe that more distinct apprehensions on this point are needed, and that for want of them, the work of improvement is carried on with less energy, consistency, and wisdom, than may and should be brought to bear upon it. The great distinction of a country, then, is, that it produces superior men. Its natural advantages are not to be disdained. But they are of secondary importance. No matter what races of animals a country breeds. The great question is, does it breed a noble race of men? No matter what its soil may be. The great question is, how far is it prolific of moral and intellectual power? No matter how stern its climate is, if it nourish force of thought and virtuous purpose. These are the products by which a country is to be tried, and institutions have value only by the impulse which they give to the mind. It has sometimes been said, that the

noblest men grow where nothing else will grow. This we do not believe, for mind is not the creature of climate or soil. But were it true, we should say, that it were better to live among rocks and sands, than in the most genial and productive region on the face of the earth.

As yet, the great distinction of a nation on which we have insisted, has been scarcely recognised. The idea of forming a superior race of men has entered little into schemes of policy. Invention and effort have been expended on matter, much more than on mind. Lofty piles have been reared; the earth has groaned under pyramids and palaces. The thought of building up a nobler order of intellect and character, has hardly crossed the most adventurous statesman. We beg that we may not be misapprehended. We offer these remarks to correct what we deem a disproportioned attention to physical good, and not at all to condemn the expenditure of ingenuity and strength on the outward world. There is a harmony between all our great interests, between inward and outward improvements; and by establishing among them a wise order, all will be secured. We have no desire to shut up man in his own spiritual nature. The mind was made to act on matter, and it grows by expressing itself in material forms. We believe, too, that in proportion as it shall gain intellectual and moral power, it will exert itself with increased energy and delight on the outward creation; will pour itself forth more freely in useful and ornamental arts; will rear more magnificent structures, and will call forth new beauties in nature. An intelligent and resolute spirit in a community, perpetually extends its triumphs over matter. It can even subject to itself the most unpromising region. Holland, diked from the ocean—Venice, rising amidst the waves—and New England, bleak and rock-bound New England, converted by a few generations from a wilderness into smiling fields and opulent cities—point us to the mind as the great source of physical good, and teach us that in making the culture of man our highest end, we shall not retard, but advance the cultivation of nature.

The question which we most solicitously ask about

this country, is, what race of men it is likely to produce. We consider its liberty of value only as far as it favours the growth of men. What is liberty? The removal of restraint from human powers. Its benefit is, that it opens new fields for action, and a wider range for the mind. The only freedom worth possessing, is that which gives enlargement to a people's energy, intellect, and virtues. The savage makes his boast of freedom. But what is its worth? Free as he is, he continues for ages in the same ignorance, leads the same comfortless life, sees the same untamed wilderness spread around him. He is indeed free from what he calls the yoke of civil institutions. But other and worse chains bind him. The very privation of civil government, is in effect a chain; for, by withholding protection from property, it virtually shackles the arm of industry, and forbids exertion for the melioration of his lot. Progress, the growth of power, is the end and boon of liberty; and without this, a people may have the name, but want the substance and spirit of freedom.

We are the more earnest in enlarging on these views, because we feel that our attachment to our country must be very much proportioned to what we deem its tendency to form a generous race of men. We pretend not to have thrown off national feeling; but we have some stronger feelings. We love our country much, but mankind more. As men and Christians, our first desire is to see the improvement of human nature. We desire to see the soul of man, wiser, firmer, nobler, more conscious of its imperishable treasures, more beneficent and powerful, more alive to its connexion with God, more able to use pleasure and prosperity aright, and more victorious over poverty, adversity, and pain. In our survey of our own and other countries, the great question which comes to us, is this, Where and under what institutions are men most likely to advance? Where are the soundest minds and the purest hearts formed? What nation possesses in its history, its traditions, its government, its religion, its manners, its pursuits, its relations to other communities, and especially in its private and public means of education, the instru-

ments and pledges of a more resolute virtue and devotion to truth, than we now witness? Such a nation, be it where it may, will engage our warmest interest. We love our country, but not blindly. In all nations we recognise one great family, and our chief wish for our native land, is, that it may take the first rank among the lights and benefactors of the human race.

These views will explain the vast importance which we attach to a national literature. By this, as we have said, we understand the expression of a nation's mind in writing. It is the action of the most gifted understandings on the community. It throws into circulation through a wide sphere the most quickening and beautiful thoughts, which have grown up in men of laborious study or creative genius. It is a much higher work than the communication of a gifted intellect in discourse. It is the mind giving to multitudes whom no voice can reach, its compressed and selected thoughts, in the most lucid order and attractive forms which it is capable of inventing. In other words, literature is the concentration of intellect for the purpose of spreading itself abroad and multiplying its energy.

Such being the nature of literature, it is plainly among the most powerful methods of exalting the character of a nation, of forming a better race of men; in truth, we apprehend that it may claim the first rank among the means of improvement. We know nothing so fitted to the advancement of society, as to bring its higher minds to bear upon the multitude; as to establish close connexions between the more and less gifted; as to spread far and wide the light which springs up in meditative, profound, and sublime understandings. It is the ordinance of God, and one of his most benevolent laws, that the human race should be carried forward by impulses which originate in a few minds, perhaps in an individual; and in this way the most interesting relations and dependencies of life are framed. When a great truth is to be revealed, it does not flash at once on the race, but dawns and brightens on a superior understanding, from which it is to emanate and to illumine future ages. On the faithfulness of great minds to this

awful function, the progress and happiness of men chiefly depend. The most illustrious benefactors of the race have been men, who, having risen to great truths, have held them as a sacred trust for their kind, and have borne witness to them amidst general darkness, under scorn and persecution, perhaps in the face of death. Such men, indeed, have not always made contributions to literature, for their condition has not allowed them to be authors; but we owe the transmission, perpetuity, and immortal power of their new and high thoughts, to kindred spirits, which have concentrated and fixed them in books.

The quickening influences of literature need not be urged on those who are familiar with the history of modern Europe, and who of course know the spring given to the human mind by the revival of ancient learning. Through their writings, the great men of antiquity have exercised a sovereignty over these later ages, not enjoyed in their own. It is more important to observe, that the influence of literature is perpetually increasing; for, through the press and the spread of education, its sphere is indefinitely enlarged. Reading, once the privilege of a few, is now the occupation of multitudes, and is to become one of the chief gratifications of all. Books penetrate everywhere, and some of the works of genius find their way to obscure dwellings, which, a little while ago, seemed barred against all intellectual light. Writing is now the mightiest instrument on earth. Through this, the mind has acquired a kind of omnipresence. To literature we then look, as the chief means of forming a better race of human beings. To superior minds, which may act through this, we look for the impulses by which their country is to be carried forward. We would teach them, that they are the depositaries of the highest power on earth, and that on them the best hopes of society rest.

We are aware that some may think, that we are exalting intellectual above moral and religious influence. They may tell us that the teaching of moral and religious truth, not by philosophers and boasters of wisdom, but by the comparatively weak and foolish, is the great

means of renovating the world. This truth we indeed regard as "the power of God unto salvation." But let none imagine that its chosen temple is an uncultivated mind, and that it selects, as its chief organs, the lips of the unlearned. Religious and moral truth is indeed appointed to carry forward mankind; but not as conceived and expounded by narrow minds, not as darkened by the ignorant, not as debased by the superstitious, not as subtilised by the visionary, not as thundered out by the intolerant fanatic, not as turned into a drivelling cant by the hypocrite. Like all other truths, it requires for its full reception and powerful communication, a free and vigorous intellect. Indeed, its grandeur and infinite connexions demand a more earnest and various use of our faculties than any other subject. As a single illustration of this remark, we may observe, that all moral and religious truth may be reduced to one great and central thought, Perfection of Mind; a thought which comprehends all that is glorious in the Divine nature, and which reveals to us the end and happiness of our own existence. This perfection has as yet only dawned on the most gifted human beings, and the great purpose of our present and future existence is to enlarge our conceptions of it without end, and to embody and make them manifest in character and life. And is this sublime thought to grow within us, to refine itself from error and impure mixture, to receive perpetual accessions of brightness from the study of God, man, and nature, and especially to be communicated powerfully to others, without the vigorous exertion of our intellectual nature? Religion has been wronged by nothing more, than by being separated from intellect; than by being removed from the province of reason and free research, into that of mystery and authority, of impulse and feeling. Hence it is, that the prevalent forms or exhibitions of Christianity, are comparatively inert, and that most which is written on the subject is of little or no worth. Christianity was given, not to contradict and degrade the rational nature, but to call it forth, to enlarge its range and its powers. It admits of endless developement. It is the last truth which should remain stationary. It

ought to be so explored and so expressed, as to take the highest place in a nation's literature, as to exalt and purify all other literature. From these remarks it will be seen, that the efficacy which we have ascribed to literary or intellectual influence in the work of human improvement, is consistent with the supreme importance of moral and religious truth.

If we have succeeded in conveying the impressions which we have aimed to make, our readers are now prepared to inquire with interest into the condition and prospects of literature among ourselves. Do we possess, indeed, what may be called a national literature? Have we produced eminent writers in the various departments of intellectual effort? Are our chief resources of instruction and literary enjoyment furnished from ourselves? We regret that the reply to these questions is so obvious. The few standard works which we have produced, and which promise to live, can hardly, by any courtesy, be denominated a national literature. On this point, if marks and proofs of our real condition were needed, we should find them in the current apologies for our deficiencies. Our writers are accustomed to plead in our excuse, our youth, the necessities of a newly settled country, and the direction of our best talents to practical life. Be the pleas sufficient or not, one thing they prove, and that is, our consciousness of having failed to make important contributions to the interests of the intellect. We have few names to place by the side of the great names in science and literature on the other side of the ocean. We want those lights which make a country conspicuous at a distance. Let it not be said, that European envy denies our just claims. In an age like this, when the literary world forms a great family, and the products of mind are circulated more rapidly than those of machinery, it is a nation's own fault, if its name be not pronounced with honour beyond itself. We have ourselves heard, and delighted to hear, beyond the Alps, our country designated as the land of Franklin. This name had scaled that mighty barrier, and made us known where our institutions and modes of life were hardly better understood than those of the natives of our forests.

We are accustomed to console ourselves for the absence of a commanding literature, by urging our superiority to other nations in our institutions for the diffusion of elementary knowledge through all classes of the community. We have here just cause for boasting, though perhaps less than we imagine. That there are gross deficiencies in our common schools, and that the amount of knowledge which they communicate, when compared with the time spent in its acquisition, is lamentably small, the community begin to feel. There is a crying need for a higher and more quickening kind of instruction than the labouring part of society have yet received, and we rejoice that the cry begins to be heard. But allowing our elementary institutions to be ever so perfect, we confess that they do not satisfy us. We want something more. A dead level of intellect, even if it should rise above what is common in other nations, would not answer our wishes and hopes for our country. We want great minds to be formed among us, minds which shall be felt afar, and through which we may act on the world. We want the human intellect to do its utmost here. We want this people to obtain a claim on the gratitude of the human race, by adding strength to the foundation, and fulness and splendour to the developement of moral and religious truth; by originality of thought, by discoveries of science, and by contributions to the refining pleasures of taste and imagination.

With these views we do and must lament, that, however we surpass other nations in providing for, and spreading elementary instruction, we fall behind many in provision for the liberal training of the intellect, for forming great scholars, for communicating that profound knowledge, and that thirst for higher truths, which can alone originate a commanding literature. The truth ought to be known. There is among us much superficial knowledge, but little severe, persevering research; little of that consuming passion for new truth, which makes outward things worthless; little resolute devotion to a high intellectual culture. There is nowhere a literary atmosphere, or such an accumulation of literary influence, as determines the whole strength of the mind

to its own enlargement, and to the manifestation of itself in enduring forms. Few among us can be said to have followed out any great subject of thought patiently, laboriously, so as to know thoroughly what others have discovered and taught concerning it, and thus to occupy a ground from which new views may be gained. Of course, exceptions are to be found. This country has produced original and profound thinkers. We have named Franklin, and we may name Edwards, one of the greatest men of his age, though unhappily his mind was lost, in a great degree, to literature, and we fear to religion, by vassalage to a false theology. His work on the Will throws, indeed, no light on human nature, and notwithstanding the nobleness of the subject, gives no great or elevated thoughts; but as a specimen of logical acuteness and controversial power, it certainly ranks in the very highest class of metaphysical writings. We might also name living authors who do honour to their country. Still, we must say, we chiefly prize what has been done among us, as a promise of higher and more extensive effort. Patriotism, as well as virtue, forbids us to burn incense to national vanity. The truth should be seen and felt. In an age of great intellectual activity, we rely chiefly for intellectual excitement and enjoyment on foreign minds, nor is our own mind felt abroad. Whilst clamouring against dependence on European manufactures, we contentedly rely on Europe for the nobler and more important fabrics of the intellect. We boast of our political institutions, and receive our chief teachings, books, impressions, from the school of monarchy. True, we labour under disadvantages. But if our liberty deserve the praise which it receives, it is more than a balance for these. We believe that it is. We believe that it does open to us an indefinite intellectual progress. Did we not so regard it, we should value it little. If hereditary governments minister most to the growth of the mind, it were better to restore them than to cling to a barren freedom. Let us not expose liberty to this reproach. Let us prove, by more generous provisions for the diffusion of elementary knowledge, for the training of great minds, and for the joint

culture of the moral and intellectual powers, that we are more and more instructed, by freedom, in the worth and greatness of human nature, and in the obligation of contributing to its strength and glory.

We have spoken of the condition of our literature. We now proceed to the consideration of the causes which obstruct its advancement; and we are immediately struck by one so prevalent, as to deserve distinct notice. We refer to the common doctrine, that we need, in this country, useful knowledge rather than profound, extensive, and elegant literature, and that this last, if we covet it, may be imported from abroad in such variety and abundance, as to save us the necessity of producing it among ourselves. How far are these opinions just? This question we purpose to answer.

That useful knowledge should receive our first and chief care, we mean not to dispute. But in our views of utility, we may differ from some who take this position. There are those who confine this term to the necessaries and comforts of life, and to the means of producing them. And is it true, that we need no knowledge, but that which clothes and feeds us? Is it true, that all studies may be dispensed with, but such as teach us to act on matter, and to turn it to our use? Happily, human nature is too stubborn to yield to this narrow utility. It is interesting to observe how the very mechanical arts, which are especially designed to minister to the necessities and comforts of life, are perpetually passing these limits; how they disdain to stop at mere convenience. A large and increasing proportion of mechanical labour is given to the gratification of an elegant taste. How simple would be the art of building, if it limited itself to the construction of a comfortable shelter. How many ships should we dismantle, and how many busy trades put to rest, were dress and furniture reduced to the standard of convenience. This "utility" would work a great change in town and country, would level to the dust the wonders of architecture, would annihilate the fine arts, and blot out innumerable beauties, which the hand of taste has spread over the face of the earth. Happily, human nature is too strong

for the utilitarian. It cannot satisfy itself with the convenient. No passion unfolds itself sooner than the love of the ornamental. The savage decorates his person, and the child is more struck with the beauty than the uses of its raiment. So far from limiting ourselves to convenient food and raiment, we enjoy but little a repast which is not arranged with some degree of order and taste; and a man who should consult comfort alone in his wardrobe, would find himself an unwelcome guest in circles which he would very reluctantly forego. We are aware that the propensity to which we have referred, often breaks out in extravagance and ruinous luxury. We know that the love of ornament is often vitiated by vanity, and that, when so perverted, it impairs, sometimes destroys, the soundness and simplicity of the mind, and the relish for true glory. Still, it teaches even in its excesses, that the idea of beauty is an indestructible principle of our nature, and this single truth is enough to put us on our guard against vulgar notions of utility.

We have said that we prize, as highly as any, useful knowledge. But by this we mean knowledge which answers and ministers to our complex and various nature; we mean that which is useful, not only to the animal man, but to the intellectual, moral, and religious man; useful to a being of spiritual faculties, whose happiness is to be found in their free and harmonious exercise. We grant, that there is a primary necessity for that information and skill by which subsistence is earned, and life is preserved; for it is plain that we must live, in order to act and improve. But life is the means; action and improvement the end; and who will deny that the noblest utility belongs to that knowledge, by which the chief purpose of our creation is accomplished? According to these views, a people should honour and cultivate, as unspeakably useful, that literature which corresponds to, and calls forth the highest faculties; which expresses and communicates energy of thought, fruitfulness of invention, force of moral purpose, a thirst for the true, and a delight in the beautiful. According to these views, we attach special importance to those branches of liter-

ature which relate to human nature, and which give it a consciousness of its own powers. History has a noble use, for it shows us human beings in various and opposite conditions, in their strength and weakness, in their progress and relapses, and thus reveals the causes and means by which the happiness and virtue of the race may be enlarged. Poetry is useful, by touching deep springs in the human soul; by giving voice to its more delicate feelings; by breathing out and making more intelligible, the sympathy which subsists between the mind and the outward universe; by creating beautiful forms or manifestations for great moral truths. Above all, that higher philosophy, which treats of the intellectual and moral constitution of man, of the foundation of knowledge, of duty, of perfection, of our relations to the spiritual world, and especially to God; this has a usefulness so peculiar as to throw other departments of knowledge into obscurity; and a people among whom this does not find honour, has little ground to boast of its superiority to uncivilised tribes. It will be seen from these remarks, that utility, with us, has a broad meaning. In truth, we are slow to condemn as useless, any researches or discoveries of original and strong minds, even when we discern in them no bearing on any interests of mankind; for all truth is of a prolific nature, and has connexions not immediately perceived; and it may be, that what we call vain speculations, may, at no distant period, link themselves with some new facts or theories, and guide a profound thinker to the most important results. The ancient mathematician, when absorbed in solitary thought, little imagined that his theorems, after the lapse of ages, were to be applied by the mind of Newton to the solution of the mysteries of the universe, and not only to guide the astronomer through the heavens, but the navigator through the pathless ocean. For ourselves, we incline to hope much from truths, which are particularly decried as useless; for the noblest and most useful truth is of an abstract or universal nature; and yet the abstract, though susceptible of infinite application, is generally, as we know, opposed to the practical.

We maintain that a people, which has any serious purpose of taking a place among improved communities, should studiously promote within itself every variety of intellectual exertion. It should resolve strenuously to be surpassed by none. It should feel that mind is the creative power, through which all the resources of nature are to be turned to account, and by which a people is to spread its influence, and establish the noblest form of empire. It should train within itself men able to understand and to use whatever is thought and discovered over the whole earth. The whole mass of human knowledge should exist among a people, not in neglected libraries, but in its higher minds. Among its most cherished institutions, should be those, which will ensure to it ripe scholars, explorers of ancient learning, profound historians and mathematicians, intellectual labourers devoted to physical and moral science, and to the creation of a refined and beautiful literature.

Let us not be misunderstood. We have no desire to rear in our country a race of pedants, of solemn triflers, of laborious commentators on the mysteries of a Greek accent or a rusty coin. We would have men explore antiquity, not to bury themselves in its dust, but to learn its spirit, and so to commune with its superior minds, as to accumulate on the present age, the influences of whatever was great and wise in former times. What we want, is, that those among us whom God has gifted to comprehend whatever is now known, and to rise to new truths, may find aids and institutions to fit them for their high calling, and may become at once springs of a higher intellectual life to their own country, and joint workers with the great of all nations and times in carrying forward their race.

We know that it will be said, that foreign scholars, bred under institutions which this country cannot support, may do our intellectual work, and send us books and learning to meet our wants. To this we have much to answer. In the first place, we reply, that to avail ourselves of the higher literature of other nations, we must place ourselves on a level with them. The products of foreign machinery we can use, without any

portion of the skill which produced them. But works of taste and genius, and profound investigations of philosophy, can only be estimated and enjoyed, through a culture and power corresponding to that from which they sprung.

In the next place, we maintain, that it is an immense gain to a people, to have in its own bosom, among its own sons, men of distinguished intellect. Such men give a spring and life to a community by their presence, their society, their fame; and what deserves remark, such men are nowhere so felt as in a republic like our own; for here the different classes of society flow together and act powerfully on each other, and a free communication, elsewhere unknown, is established between the gifted few and the many. It is one of the many good fruits of liberty, that it increases the diffusiveness of intellect; and accordingly a free country is above all others false to itself, in withholding from its superior minds the means of enlargement.

We next observe, and we think the observation important, that the facility with which we receive the literature of foreign countries, instead of being a reason for neglecting our own, is a strong motive for its cultivation. We mean not to be paradoxical, but we believe that it would be better to admit no books from abroad, than to make them substitutes for our own intellectual activity. The more we receive from other countries, the greater the need of an original literature. A people, into whose minds the thoughts of foreigners are poured perpetually, needs an energy within itself to resist, to modify this mighty influence, and without it, will inevitably sink under the worst bondage, will become intellectually tame and enslaved. We have certainly no desire to complete our restrictive system, by adding to it a literary non-intercourse law. We rejoice in the increasing intellectual connexion between this country and the old world. But sooner would we rupture it, than see our country sitting passively at the feet of foreign teachers. It were better to have no literature, than form ourselves unresistingly on a foreign one. The true sovereigns of a country are those who determine its

mind, its modes of thinking, its tastes, its principle
we cannot consent to lodge this sovereignty in the
of strangers. A country, like an individual, has d
and power only in proportion as it is self-formed.
is a great stir to secure to ourselves the manufac
of our own clothing. We say, let others spin and
for us, but let them not think for us. A people,
government and laws are nothing but the embody
public opinion, should jealously guard this opinion a
foreign dictation. We need a literature to count
and to use wisely the literature which we import.
need an inward power proportionate to that wh
exerted on us, as the means of self-subsistence.
particularly true of a people, whose institutions de
for their support a free and bold spirit, that they s
be able to subject to a manly and independent criti
whatever comes from abroad. These views seem
to deserve serious attention. We are more and
a reading people. Books are already among the
powerful influences here. The question is, shall Eu
through these, fashion us after its pleasure?
America be only an echo of what is thought and
ten under the aristocracies beyond the ocean?

Another view of the subject is this. A foreign li
ture will always, in a measure, be foreign. It has sp
from the soul of another people, which, however lil
still not our own soul. Every people has much i
own character and feelings, which can only be emb
by its own writers, and which, when transfused thr
literature, makes it touching and true, like the voi
our earliest friend.

We now proceed to an argument in favour of n
literature, which, if less obvious, is, we believe
less sound than those now already adduced. We
hitherto spoken of literature as the expression, the
munication of the higher minds in a community.
now add, that it does much more than is commonly
posed, to *form* such minds, so that without it, a pe
wants one of the chief means of educating or perfe
talent and genius. One of the great laws of our na
and a law singularly important to social beings, is,

the intellect enlarges and strengthens itself by expressing worthily its best views. In this, as in other respects, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Superior minds are formed, not merely by solitary thought, but almost as much by communication. Great thoughts are never fully possessed, till he who has conceived them, has given them fit utterance. One of the noblest and most invigorating labours of genius, is to clothe its conceptions in clear and glorious forms, to give them existence in other souls. Thus literature creates, as well as manifests, intellectual power, and without it, the highest minds will never be summoned to the most invigorating action.

We doubt whether a man ever brings his faculties to bear with their whole force on a subject, until he writes upon it for the instruction or gratification of others. To place it clearly before others, he feels the necessity of viewing it more vividly himself. By attempting to seize his thoughts, and fix them in an enduring form, he finds them vague and unsatisfactory, to a degree which he did not suspect, and toils for a precision and harmony of views, of which he never before felt the need. He places his subject in new lights; submits it to a searching analysis; compares and connects with it his various knowledge; seeks for it new illustrations and analogies; weighs objections; and through these processes often arrives at higher truths than he first aimed to illustrate. Dim conceptions grow bright. Glorious thoughts, which had darted as meteors through the mind, are arrested, and gradually shine with a sunlike splendour, with prolific energy, on the intellect and heart. It is one of the chief distinctions of a great mind, that it is prone to rush into twilight regions, and to catch faint glimmerings of distant and unbounded prospects; and nothing perhaps aids it more to pierce the shadows which surround it, than the labour to unfold to other minds the indistinct conceptions which have dawned on its own. Even where composition yields no such fruits, it is still a great intellectual help. It always favours comprehensive and systematical views. The laborious distribution of a great subject, so as to assign to each part or topic its just

position and due proportion, is singularly fitted to give compass and persevering force of thought.

If we confine ourselves simply to the consideration of style, we shall have reason to think that a people among whom this is neglected, wants one important intellectual aid. In this, great power is exerted, and by exertion increased. To the multitude, indeed, language seems so natural an instrument, that to use it with clearness and energy seems no great effort. It is framed, they think, to the writer's hand, and so continually employed as to need little thought or skill. But in nothing is the creative power of a gifted writer seen more than in his style. True, his words may be found in the dictionary. But there they lie disjointed and dead. What a wonderful life does he breathe into them, by compacting them into his sentences! Perhaps he uses no term which has not been hackneyed by ordinary writers; and yet with these vulgar materials what miracles does he achieve! What a world of thought does he condense into a phrase! By new combinations of common words, what delicate hues or what a blaze of light does he pour over his subject! Power of style depends very little on the structure or copiousness of the language which the writer of genius employs, but chiefly, if not wholly, on his own mind. The words arranged in his dictionary, are no more fitted to depict his thoughts, than the block of marble in the sculptor's shop, to show forth the conceptions which are dawning in his mind. Both are inert materials. The power which pervades them, comes from the soul; and the same creative energy is manifested in the production of a noble style, as in extracting beautiful forms from lifeless stone. How unfaithful, then, is a nation to its own intellect, in which grace and force of style receive no culture.

The remarks now made on the importance of literature as a means of educating talent and genius, we are aware, do not apply equally to all subjects or kinds of knowledge. In the exact or physical sciences, a man may acquire much without composition, and may make discoveries without registering them. Even here, however, we believe, that, by a systematic developement of

his views in a luminous style, he will bring great aid to his own faculties, as well as to others'. It is on the vast subjects of morals and human nature, that the mind especially strengthens itself by elaborate composition; and these, let it be remembered, form the staple of the highest literature. Moral truth, under which we include everything relating to mind and character, is of a refined and subtle, as well as elevated nature, and requires the joint and full exercise of discrimination, invention, imagination, and sensibility, to give it effectual utterance. A writer who would make it visible and powerful, must strive to join an austere logic to a fervent eloquence; must place it in various lights; must create for it interesting forms; must wed it to beauty; must illuminate it by similitudes and contrasts; must show its correspondence with the outward world; perhaps must frame for it a vast machinery of fiction. How invigorating are these efforts! Yet it is only in writing, in elaborate composition, that they are deliberately called forth and sustained, and without literature they would almost cease. It may be said of many truths, that greater intellectual energy is required to express them with effect, than to conceive them; so that a nation, which does not encourage this expression, impoverishes, so far, its own mind. Take for example, Shakspeare's Hamlet. This is a developement of a singularly interesting view of human nature. It shows us a mind, to which life is a burden; in which the powers of meditation and feeling are disproportioned to the active powers; which sinks under its own weight, under the consciousness of wanting energies commensurate with its visions of good, with its sore trials, and with the solemn task which is laid upon it. To conceive clearly this form of human nature, shows indeed the genius of the writer. But what a new power is required to bring it out in such a drama as Shakspeare's; to give it life and action; to invent for it circumstances and subordinate characters, fitted to call it forth; to give it tones of truth and nature; to show the hues which it casts over all the objects of thought! This intellectual energy we all perceive; and this was not merely *manifested* in Shakspeare's work, but without

such a work, it would not have been awakened. His invention would have slumbered, had he not desired to give forth his mind in a visible and enduring form. Thus literature is the nurse of genius. Through this, genius learns its own strength, and continually accumulates it; and of course, in a country without literature, genius, however liberally bestowed by the Creator, will languish, and will fail to fulfil its great duty of quickening the mass amidst which it lives.

We come now to our last, and what we deem a weighty argument in favour of a native literature. We desire and would cherish it, because we hope from it important aids to the cause of truth and human nature. We believe, that a literature, springing up in this new soil, would bear new fruits, and, in some respects, more precious fruits, than are elsewhere produced. We know that our hopes may be set down to the account of that national vanity, which, with too much reason, is placed by foreigners among our besetting sins. But we speak from calm and deliberate conviction. We are inclined to believe, that, as a people, we occupy a position, from which the great subjects of literature may be viewed more justly than from those which most other nations hold. Undoubtedly we labour under disadvantages. We want the literary apparatus of Europe; her libraries, her universities, her learned institutions, her race of professed scholars, her spots consecrated by the memory of sages, and a thousand stirring associations which hover over ancient nurseries of learning. But the mind is not a local power. Its spring is within itself, and under the inspiration of liberal and high feeling, it may attain and worthily express nobler truth than outward helps could reveal.

The great distinction of our country, is, that we enjoy some peculiar advantages for understanding our own nature. Man is the great subject of literature, and juster and profounder views of man may be expected here, than elsewhere. In Europe, political and artificial distinctions have, more or less, triumphed over and obscured our common nature. In Europe, we meet kings, nobles, priests, peasants. How much rarer is it to meet men; by which we mean, human beings conscious of their own

nature, and conscious of the utter worthlessness of all outward distinctions, compared with what is treasured up in their own souls! Man does not value himself as man. It is for his blood, his rank, or some artificial distinction, and not for the attributes of humanity, that he holds himself in respect. The institutions of the old world all tend to throw obscurity over what we most need to know, and that is, the worth and claims of a human being. We know that great improvements in this respect are going on abroad. Still the many are too often postponed to the few. The mass of men are regarded as instruments to work with, as materials to be shaped for the use of their superiors. That consciousness of our own nature, which contains, as a germ, all nobler thoughts, which teaches us at once self-respect and respect for others, and which binds us to God by filial sentiment and hope, this has been repressed, kept down by establishments founded in force; and literature, in all its departments, bears, we think, the traces of this inward degradation. We conceive that our position favours a juster and profounder estimate of human nature. We mean not to boast, but there are fewer obstructions to that moral consciousness, that consciousness of humanity, of which we have spoken. Man is not hidden from us by as many disguises as in the old world. The essential equality of all human beings, founded on the possession of a spiritual, progressive, immortal nature, is, we hope, better understood; and nothing more than this single conviction is needed, to work the mightiest changes in every province of human life and of human thought.

We have stated what seems to us our most important distinction. But our position has other advantages. The mere circumstance of its being a new one, gives reason to hope for some new intellectual activity, some fresher views of nature and life. We are not borne down by the weight of antiquated institutions, time-hallowed abuses, and the remnants of feudal barbarism. The absence of a religious establishment, is an immense gain, as far as originality of mind is in question; for an establishment, however advantageous in other respects, is, by its nature, hostile to discovery and progress. To

keep the mind where it is, to fasten the notions of one age on all future time, is its aim and proper business; and if it happened, as has generally been the case, to grow up in an age of strife and passion, when, as history demonstrates, the church was overrun with error, it cannot but perpetuate darkness and mental bondage. Among us, intellect, though far from being free, has broken some of the chains of other countries, and is more likely, we conceive, to propose to itself its legitimate object, truth—everlasting and universal truth.

We have no thought of speaking contemptuously of the literature of the old world. It is our daily nutriment. We feel our debt to be immense to the glorious company of pure and wise minds, which in foreign lands have bequeathed us in writing their choicest thoughts and holiest feelings. Still we feel, that all existing literature has been produced under influences, which have necessarily mixed with it much error and corruption; and that the whole of it ought to pass, and must pass, under rigorous review. For example, we think that the history of the human race is to be re-written. Men imbued with the prejudices which thrive under aristocracies and state religions, cannot understand it. Past ages, with their great events, and great men, are to undergo, we think, a new trial, and to yield new results. It is plain, that history is already viewed under new aspects, and we believe that the true principles for studying and writing it, are to be unfolded here, at least as rapidly as in other countries. It seems to us that in literature an immense work is yet to be done. The most interesting questions to mankind, are yet in debate. Great principles are yet to be settled in criticism, in morals, in politics; and above all, the true character of religion is to be rescued from the disguises and corruptions of ages. We want a reformation. We want a literature, in which genius will pay supreme, if not undivided homage, to truth and virtue; in which the childish admiration of what has been called greatness, will give place to a wise moral judgment; which will breathe reverence for the mind, and elevating thoughts of God. The part which this country is to bear in this great in-

tellectual reform, we presume not to predict. We feel, however, that if true to itself, it will have the glory and happiness of giving new impulses to the human mind. This is our cherished hope. We should have no heart to encourage native literature, did we not hope that it would become instinct with a new spirit. We cannot admit the thought, that this country is to be only a repetition of the old world. We delight to believe that God in the fulness of time, has brought a new continent to light, in order that the human mind should move here with a new freedom, should frame new social institutions, should explore new paths, and reap new harvests. We are accustomed to estimate nations by their creative energies, and we shall blush for our country, if, in circumstances so peculiar, original, and creative, it shall satisfy itself with a passive reception and mechanical reiteration of the thoughts of strangers.

We have now completed our remarks on the importance of a native literature. The next great topic is, the means of producing it; and here our limits forbid us to enlarge; yet we cannot pass it over in silence. A primary and essential means of the improvement of our literature, is, that, as a people, we should feel its value, should desire it, should demand it, should encourage it, and should give it a hearty welcome. It will come if called for, and under this conviction, we have now laboured to create a want for it in the community. We say, that we must call for it; by which we mean, not merely that we must invite it by good wishes and kind words, but must make liberal provision for intellectual education. We must enlarge our literary institutions, secure more extensive and profound teaching, and furnish helps and resources to men of superior talent for continued, laborious research. As yet, intellectual labour, devoted to a thorough investigation and a full developement of great subjects, is almost unknown among us; and without it, we shall certainly rear few lasting monuments of thought. We boast of our primary schools. We want universities worthy of the name, where a man of genius and literary zeal, may possess himself of all that is yet known, and may strengthen himself by inter-

course with kindred minds. We know it will be that we cannot afford these. But it is not so. W rich enough for ostentation, for intemperance, for lu We can lavish millions on fashion, on furnitur dress, on our palaces, on our pleasures; but we nothing to spend for the mind. Where lies our erty? In the purse or in the soul?

We have spoken of improved institutions as e tial to an improved literature. We beg, howeve to be misunderstood, as if these were invested w creating power, or would necessarily yield the r which we desire. They are the means, not cau advancement. Literature depends on individual ge and this, though fostered, cannot be created by ou helps. No human mechanism can produce ori thought. After all the attempts to explain by e tion the varieties of intellect, we are compelle believe that minds, like all the other products of n have original and indestructible differences; that are not exempted from that great and beautiful which joins with strong resemblances as strong di ties; and, of consequence, we believe, that the men are to be the lights of the world, bring with them commission and power from God. Still, whilst in tions cannot create, they may and do unfold ge and for want of them, great minds often slumbe run to waste, whilst a still larger class, who wan nius, but possess admirable powers, fail of that cu through which they might enjoy and approach more gifted brethren.

A people, as we have said, are to give aid to liter by founding wise and enlarged institutions. They do much more. They may exert a nobler patronage cherishing in their own breasts the love of truth, v and freedom, they may do much to nurse and k genius in its favoured possessors. There is a consta action between a community and the great minds w spring up within it, and they form one another. In t great minds are developed more by the spirit and ch ter of the people to which they belong, than by all causes. Thus, a free spirit, a thirst for new and hi

knowledge in a community, does infinitely more for literature, than the most splendid benefactions under despotism. A nation under any powerful excitement, becomes fruitful of talent. Among a people called to discuss great questions, to contend for great interests, to make great sacrifices for the public weal, we always find new and unsuspected energies of thought brought out. A mercenary, selfish, luxurious, sensual people, toiling only to secure the pleasures of sloth, will often communicate their own softness and baseness to the superior minds which dwell among them. In this impure atmosphere, the celestial spark burns dim, and well will it be, if God's great gift of genius be not impiously prostituted to lust and crime.

In conformity with the views now stated, we believe that literature is to be carried forward, here and elsewhere, chiefly by some new and powerful impulses communicated to society; and it is a question naturally suggested by this discussion, from what impulse, principle, excitement, the highest action of the mind may now be expected. When we look back, we see that literature has been originated and modified by a variety of principles; by patriotism and national feeling, by reverence for antiquity, by the spirit of innovation, by enthusiasm, by scepticism, by the passion for fame, by romantic love, and by political and religious convulsions. Now we do not expect from these causes any higher action of the mind, than they have yet produced. Perhaps most of them have spent their force. The very improvements of society seem to forbid the manifestation of their former energy. For example, the patriotism of antiquity and the sexual love of chivalrous ages, which inspired so much of the old literature, are now seen to be feverish and vicious excesses of natural principles, and have gone, we trust, never to return.

Are we asked, then, to what impulse or power, we look for a higher literature than has yet existed? We answer, to a new action or developement of the religious principle. This remark will probably surprise not a few of our readers. It seems to us, that the energy with which this principle is to act on the intellect, is hardly

suspected. Men identify religion with superstition, with fanaticism, with the common forms of Christianity; and seeing it arrayed against intellect, leagued with oppression, fettering inquiry, and incapable of being blended with the sacred dictates of reason and conscience, they see in its progress only new encroachments on free and enlightened thinking. Still, man's relation to God is the great quickening truth, throwing all other truths into insignificance, and a truth which, however obscured and paralysed by the many errors which ignorance and fraud have hitherto linked with it, has ever been a chief spring of human improvement. We look to it as the true life of the intellect. No man can be just to himself, can comprehend his own existence, can put forth all his powers with an heroic confidence, can deserve to be the guide and inspirer of other minds, till he has risen to communion with the Supreme Mind; till he feels his filial connexion with the Universal Parent; till he regards himself as the recipient and minister of the Infinite Spirit; till he feels his consecration to the ends which religion unfolds; till he rises above human opinion, and is moved by a higher impulse than fame.

From these remarks it will be seen, that our chief hopes of an improved literature, rest on our hopes of an improved religion. From the prevalent theology, which has come down to us from the dark ages, we hope nothing. It has done its best. All that can grow up under its sad shade, has already been brought forth. It wraps the Divine nature and human nature in impenetrable gloom. It overlays Christianity with technical, arbitrary dogmas. True faith is of another lineage. It comes from the same source with reason, conscience, and our best affections, and is in harmony with them all. True faith is essentially a moral conviction; a confidence in the reality and immutableness of moral distinctions; a confidence in disinterested virtue or in spiritual excellence as the supreme good; a confidence in God as its fountain and almighty friend, and in Jesus Christ as having lived and died to breathe it into the soul; a confidence in its power, triumphs, and immortality; a confidence, through which outward changes,

obstructions, disasters, sufferings, are overcome, or rather made instruments of perfection. Such a faith, unfolded freely and powerfully, must "work mightily" on the intellect as well as on practice. By revealing to us the supreme purpose of the Creator, it places us, as it were, in the centre of the universe, from which the harmonies, true relations, and brightest aspects of things are discerned. It unites calmness and enthusiasm, and the concord of these seemingly hostile elements is essential to the full and healthy action of the creative powers of the soul. It opens the eye to beauty and the heart to love. Literature, under this influence, will become more ingenuous and single-hearted; will penetrate farther into the soul; will find new interpretations of nature and life; will breathe a martyr's love of truth, tempered with a never failing charity; and, whilst sympathising with all human suffering, will still be pervaded by a healthful cheerfulness, and will often break forth in tones of irrepressible joy, responsive to that happiness which fills God's universe.

We cannot close our remarks on the means of an improved literature, without offering one suggestion. We earnestly recommend to our educated men a more extensive acquaintance with the intellectual labours of continental Europe. Our reading is confined too much to English books, and especially to the more recent publications of Great Britain. In this we err. We ought to know the different modes of viewing and discussing great subjects in different nations. We should be able to compare the writings of the highest minds in a great variety of circumstances. Nothing can favour more our own intellectual independence and activity. Let English literature be ever so fruitful and profound, we should still impoverish ourselves by making it our sole nutriment. We fear, however, that at the present moment English books want much which we need. The intellect of that nation is turned now to what are called practical and useful subjects. Physical science goes forward, and what is very encouraging, it is spread with unexampled zeal through all classes of the community. Abuses of government, of the police, of the penal code, of charity, of poor laws, and corn laws, are laboriously

explored. General education is improved. Science is applied to the arts with brilliant success. We see much good in progress. But we find little profound or fervid thinking, expressed in the higher forms of literature. The noblest subjects of the intellect receive little attention. We see an almost total indifference to intellectual and moral science. In England there is a great want of philosophy, in the true sense of that word. If we examine her reviews, in which much of the intellectual power of the nation is expended, we meet perpetually a jargon of criticism, which shows a singular want of great and general principles in estimating works of art. We have no ethical work of any living English writer to be compared with that of Degerando, entitled, "*Du Moral Perfectionnement;*" and although we have little respect for the rash generalizations of the bold and eloquent Cousin, yet the interest which his metaphysics awaken in Paris, is in our estimation a better presage than the lethargy which prevails on such topics in England. In these remarks we have no desire to depreciate the literature of England, which, taken as a whole, we regard as the noblest monument of the human mind. We rejoice in our descent from England, and esteem our free access to her works of science and genius, as among our high privileges. Nor do we feel as if her strength were spent. We see no wrinkles on her brow, no decrepitude in her step. At this moment she has authors, especially in poetry and fiction, whose names are "familiar in our mouths as household words," and who can never perish but with her language. Still, we think, that at present her intellect is labouring more for herself than for mankind, and that our scholars, if they would improve our literature, should cultivate an intimacy not only with that of England, but of continental Europe.

We have now finished our remarks on the importance and means of an improved literature among ourselves. Are we asked what we hope in this particular? We answer, much. We see reasons for anticipating an increased and more efficient direction of talent to this object. But on these we cannot enlarge. There is, however, one ground of expectation, to which we will

call a moment's attention. We apprehend that literature is to make progress through an important change in society, which civilisation and good institutions are making more and more apparent. It seems to us that, through these causes, political life is less and less regarded as the only or chief sphere for superior minds, and that influence and honour are more and more accumulated in the hands of literary and thinking men. Of consequence, more and more of the intellect of communities is to be drawn to literature. The distinction between antiquity and the present times, in respect to the importance attached to political life, seems to us striking; and it is not an accidental difference, but founded on permanent causes which are to operate with increased power. In ancient times, everything abroad and at home, threw men upon the public, and generated an intense thirst for political power. On the contrary, the improvement of later periods incline men to give importance to literature. For example, the instability of the ancient republics, the unsettled relations of different classes of society, the power of demagogues and orators, the intensity of factions, the want of moral and religious restraints, the want of some regular organ for expressing the public mind, the want of precedents and precise laws for the courts of justice, these and other circumstances gave to the ancient citizen a feeling as if revolutions and convulsions were inseparable from society, turned his mind with unremitting anxiety to public affairs, and made a participation of political power an important, if not an essential means of personal safety.—Again, the ancient citizen had no home, in our sense of the word. He lived in the market, the forum, the place of general resort, and of course his attention was very much engrossed by affairs of state.—Again, religion, which now more than all things, throws a man upon himself, was in ancient times a public concern, and turned men to political life. The religion of the heart and closet was unknown. The relation of the gods to particular states, was their most prominent attribute; and to conciliate their favour to the community, the chief end of worship. Accordingly, religion consisted chiefly in public and

national rites. In Rome, the highest men in the state presided at the altar, and adding to their other titles that of Supreme Pontiff, performed the most solemn functions of the priesthood. Thus the whole strength of the religious principle was turned into political channels. The gods were thought to sustain no higher office than a political one, and of consequence this was esteemed the most glorious for men.—Once more, in ancient times political rank was vastly more efficient, whether for good or for evil, than at present, and of consequence was the object of a more insatiable ambition. It was almost the only way of access to the multitude. The public man held a sway over opinion, over his country, perhaps over foreign states, now unknown. It is the influence of the press and of good institutions to reduce the importance of the man of office. In proportion as private individuals can act on the public mind; in proportion as a people read, think, and have the means of expressing and enforcing their opinions; in proportion as laws become fixed, known, and sanctioned by the moral sense of the community; in proportion as the interests of the state, the principles of administration, and all public measures, are subjected to free and familiar discussion, government becomes a secondary influence. The power passes into the hands of those who think, write, and spread their minds far and wide. Accordingly, literature is to become more and more the instrument of swaying men, of doing good, of achieving fame. The contrast between ancient and modern times, in the particulars now stated, is too obvious to need illustration, and our great inference is equally clear. The vast improvements, which in the course of ages have taken place in social order, in domestic life, in religion, in knowledge, all conspire to one result, all tend to introduce other and higher influences than political power, and to give to that form of intellectual effort, which we call literature, dominion over human affairs. Thus truth, we apprehend, is more and more felt; and from its influence, joined with our peculiar condition and free institutions, we hope for our country the happiness and glory of a pure, deep, rich, beautiful, and ennobling literature.

REMARKS

ON THE

FORMATION OF ASSOCIATIONS,

TO ACCOMPLISH ALL OBJECTS BY ORGANIZED MASSES OF SOCIETY.

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1. Fourth ANNUAL REPORT to the AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, read and accepted May 26, 1829, with the ADDRESSES at the Annual Meeting.
2. The Second ANNUAL REPORT of the Executive Committee of the AMERICAN SOCIETY for the PROMOTION of TEMPERANCE, presented Jan. 28, 1829.
3. First ANNUAL REPORT of the GENERAL UNION for Promoting the OBSERVANCE of the CHRISTIAN SABBATH, adopted May 12, 1829.

WE have affixed to this article the titles of several reports of societies, not so much for the purpose of discussing the merits of the several institutions whose labours they celebrate, as with the more general design of offering some remarks on the disposition which now prevails to form associations, and to accomplish all objects by organized masses. A difference of opinion on this point has begun to manifest itself, and murmurs against the countless societies which modestly solicit, or authoritatively claim our aid, which now assail us with fair promises of the good which they purpose, and now with rhetorical encomiums on the good they have done, begin to break forth from the judicious and well disposed, as well as from the querulous and selfish. These doubts and complaints, however, are most frequently excited by particular cases of unfair or injurious

operations in societies. As yet no general principles have been established, by which the value of this mode of action may be determined, or the relative claims of different associations may be weighed. We will not promise to supply the deficiency, but we hope to furnish some help to a sounder judgment than yet prevails on the subject.

That the subject deserves attention, no man who observes the signs of the times, can doubt. Its importance forces itself on the reflecting. In truth, one of the most remarkable circumstances or features of our age, is the energy with which the principle of combination, or of action by joint forces, by associated numbers, is manifesting itself. It may be said, without much exaggeration, that everything is done now by societies. Men have learned what wonders can be accomplished in certain cases by union, and seem to think that union is competent to everything. You can scarcely name an object for which some institution has not been formed. Would men spread one set of opinions, or crush another? They make a society. Would they improve the penal code, or relieve poor debtors? They make societies. Would they encourage agriculture, or manufactures, or science? They make societies. Would one class encourage horse-racing, and another discourage travelling on Sunday? They form societies. We have immense institutions spreading over the country, combining hosts for particular objects. We have minute ramifications of these societies, penetrating everywhere except through the poor-house, and conveying resources from the domestic, the labourer, and even the child, to the central treasury. This principle of association is worthy the attention of the philosopher, who simply aims to understand society, and its most powerful springs. To the philanthropist and the Christian it is exceedingly interesting, for it is a mighty engine, and must act either for good or for evil, to an extent which no man can foresee or comprehend.

It is very easy, we conceive, to explain this great developement of the principle of co-operation. The main cause is, the immense facility given to intercourse by

modern improvements, by increased commerce and travelling, by the post-office, by the steam-boat, and especially by the press—by newspapers, periodicals, tracts, and other publications. Through these means, men of one mind, through a whole country, easily understand one another, and easily act together. The grand manœuvre to which Napoleon owed his victories, we mean the concentration of great numbers on a single point, is now placed within the reach of all parties and sects. It may be said, that, by facilities of intercourse, men are brought within one another's attraction, and become arranged according to their respective affinities. Those who have one great object, find one another out through a vast extent of country, join their forces, settle their mode of operation, and act together with the uniformity of a disciplined army. So extensive have coalitions become, through the facilities now described, and so various and rapid are the means of communication, that when a few leaders have agreed on an object, an impulse may be given in a month to the whole country, whole states may be deluged with tracts and other publications, and a voice like that of many waters, be called forth from immense and widely separated multitudes. Here is a new power brought to bear on society, and it is a great moral question, how it ought to be viewed, and what duties it imposes.

That this mode of action has advantages and recommendations, is very obvious. The principal arguments in its favour may be stated in a few words. Men, it is justly said, can do jointly, what they cannot do singly. The union of minds and hands, works wonders. Men grow efficient by concentrating their powers. Joint effort conquers nature, hews through mountains, rears pyramids, dikes out the ocean. Man, left to himself, living without a fellow, if he could indeed so live, would be one of the weakest of creatures. Associated with his kind, he gains dominion over the strongest animals, over the earth and the sea, and, by his growing knowledge, may be said to obtain a kind of property in the universe.

Nor is this all. Men not only accumulate power by

union, but gain warmth and earnestness. The heart is kindled. An electric communication is established between those who are brought nigh, and bound to each other, in common labours. Man droops in solitude. No sound excites him like the voice of his fellow-creature. The mere sight of a human countenance, brightened with strong and generous emotion, gives new strength to act or suffer. Union not only brings to a point forces which before existed, and which were ineffectual through separation, but by the feeling and interest which it rouses, it becomes a creative principle, calls forth new forces, and gives the mind a consciousness of powers, which would otherwise have been unknown.

We have here given the common arguments by which the disposition to association is justified and recommended. They may be summed up in a few words; namely, that our social principles and relations are the great springs of improvement, and of vigorous and efficient exertion. That there is much truth in this representation of the influences of society, we at once feel. That without impulses and excitements from abroad, without sympathies and communication with our fellow-creatures, we should gain nothing and accomplish nothing, we mean not to deny. Still we apprehend, that on this subject there is a want of accurate views and just discrimination. We apprehend that the true use of society is not sufficiently understood; that the chief benefit which it is intended to confer, and the chief danger to which it exposes us, are seldom weighed, and that errors or crude opinions on these points, deprive us of many benefits of our social connexions. These topics have an obvious bearing on the subject of this article. It is plain that the better we understand the true use, the chief benefit, and the chief peril of our social principles and relations, the better we shall be prepared to judge of associations which are offered to our patronage. On these topics, then, we propose first to give our views; and in so doing, we shall allow ourselves a considerable latitude, because, in our judgment, the influences of society at present tend strongly to excess, and especially menace that individuality of

character, for which they can yield no adequate compensation.

The great principle, from which we start in this preliminary discussion, and in which all our views of the topics above proposed, are involved, may be briefly expressed. It is this:—Society is chiefly important, as it ministers to, and calls forth, intellectual and moral energy and freedom. Its action on the individual is beneficial, in proportion as it awakens in him a power to act on himself, and to control or withstand the social influences to which he is at first subjected. Society serves us, by furnishing objects, occasions, materials, excitements, through which the whole soul may be brought into vigorous exercise, may acquire a consciousness of its free and responsible nature, may become a law to itself, and may rise to the happiness and dignity of framing and improving itself without limit or end. Inward, creative energy, is the highest good which accrues to us from our social principles and connexions. The mind is enriched, not by what it passively receives from others, but by its own action on what it receives. We would especially affirm of virtue, that it does not consist in what we inherit, or what comes to us from abroad. It is of inward growth, and it grows by nothing so much as by resistance of foreign influences, by acting from our deliberate convictions, in opposition to the principles of sympathy and imitation. According to these views, our social nature and connexions are means. Inward power is the end; a power which is to triumph over, and control the influence of society.

We are told that we owe to society our most valuable knowledge. And true it is, that, were we cast from birth into solitude, we should grow up in brutal ignorance. But it is also true, that the knowledge which we receive is of little value, any farther than it is food and excitement to intellectual action. Its worth is to be measured by the energy with which it is sought and employed. Knowledge is noble, in proportion as it is prolific; in proportion as it quickens the mind to the acquisition of higher truth. Let it be rested in passively, and it profits us nothing. Let the judgment of

others be our trust, so that we cease to judge for ourselves, and the intellect is degraded into a worthless machine. The dignity of the mind is to be estimated by the energy of its efforts for its own enlargement. It becomes heroic, when it reverences itself and asserts its freedom in a cowardly and servile age; when it withstands society through a calm, but invincible love of truth, and a consciousness of the dignity and progressiveness of its powers.

The indispensable necessity of instruction from our fellow-creatures, we in no degree question. But perhaps few are aware how imperfect are the conceptions received from the best instructor, and how much must be done by our own solitary thinking, to give them consistency and vividness. It may be doubted whether a fellow-creature can ever impart to us apprehensions of a complex subject, which are altogether just. Be the teacher ever so unerring, his language can hardly communicate his mind with entire precision; for few words awaken exactly the same thoughts in different men. The views which we receive from the most gifted beings, are at best an approximation to truth. We have spoken of unerring teachers; but where are these to be found? Our daily intercourse is with fallible beings, most of whom are undisciplined in intellect, the slaves of prejudice, and unconscious of their own spiritual energies. The essential condition of intellectual progress in such a world, is the resistance of social influences, or of impressions from our fellow-beings.

What we have said of intellectual, is still more true of moral progress. No human being exists, whose character can be proposed as a faultless model. But could a perfect individual be found, we should only injure ourselves by indiscriminate, servile imitation; for much which is good in another, is good in him alone, belongs to his peculiar constitution, has been the growth of his peculiar experience, is harmonious and beautiful only in combination with his other attributes, and would be unnatural, awkward, and forced in a servile imitator. The very strength of emotion, which in one man is virtue, in another would be defect; for virtue depends on

the balance which exists between the various principles of the soul; and that intenseness of feeling, which, when joined with force of thought and purpose, is healthful and invigorating, would prove a disease, or might approach insanity, in a weak and sensitive mind. No man should part with his individuality and aim to become another. No process is so fatal as that which would cast all men into one mould. Every human being is intended to have a character of his own, to be what no other is, to do what no other can do. Our common nature is to be unfolded in unbounded diversities. It is rich enough for infinite manifestations. It is to wear innumerable forms of beauty and glory. Every human being has a work to carry on within, duties to perform abroad, influences to exert, which are peculiarly his, and which no conscience but his own can teach. Let him not, then, enslave his conscience to others, but act with the freedom, strength, and dignity of one, whose highest law is in his own breast.

We know that it may be replied to us, that Providence, by placing us at birth in entire subjection to social influences, has marked out society as the great instrument of determining the human mind. The child, it is said, is plainly designed to receive passively and with unresisting simplicity, a host of impressions, thoughts, and feelings, from those around him. This we know. But we know, too, that childhood is not to endure for ever. We know that the impressions, pleasures, pains, which throng and possess the infant mind, are intended to awaken in it an energy, by which it is to subject them to itself; by which it is to separate from the crude mass what is true and pure; by which it is to act upon, and modify, and throw into new combinations, the materials forced upon it originally by sensation and society. It is only by putting forth this inward and self-forming power, that we emerge from childhood. He who continues to be passively moulded, prolongs his infancy to the tomb. There is deep wisdom in the declaration of Jesus, that to be his disciple, we must "hate father and mother;" or, in other words, that we must surrender the prejudices of education to the new

lights which God gives us; that the love of truth must triumph over the influences of our best and earliest friends; that, forsaking the maxims of society, we must frame ourselves according to the standard of moral perfection set before us in the life, spirit, and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is interesting to observe how the Creator, who has subjected the child at first to social influences, has even at that age, provided for its growing freedom, by inspiring it with an overflowing animation, an inexpressible joy, an impatience of limits, a thirst for novelty, a delight in adventure, an ardent fancy, all suited to balance the authority of the old, and gradually mingling with the credulity of infancy, that questioning, doubting spirit, on which intellectual progress chiefly depends.

The common opinion is, that our danger from society arises wholly from its bad members, and that we cannot easily be too much influenced by the good. But, to our apprehension, there is a peril in the influence both of good and bad. What many of us have chiefly to dread from society, is, not that we shall acquire a positive character of vice, but that it will impose on us a negative character, that we shall live and die passive beings, that the creative and self-forming energy of the soul will not be called forth in the work of our improvement. Our danger is, that we shall substitute the consciences of others for our own, that we shall paralyse our faculties through dependence on foreign guides, that we shall be moulded from abroad instead of determining ourselves. The pressure of society upon us is constant, and almost immeasureable; now open and direct in the form of authority and menace, now subtle and silent in the guise of blandishment and promise. What mighty power is lodged in a frown or a smile, in the voice of praise and flattery, in scorn or neglect, in public opinion, in domestic habits and prejudices, in the state and spirit of the community to which we belong! Nothing escapes the cognisance of society. Its legislation extends even to our dress, movements, features; and the individual bears the traces, even in countenance, air, and voice, of the social influences amidst which he has been plunged.

We are in great peril of growing up slaves to this exacting, arbitrary sovereign; of forgetting, or never learning our true responsibility; of living in unconsciousness of that divine power with which we are invested over ourselves, and in which all the dignity of our nature is concentered; of overlooking the sacredness of our minds, and laying them open to impressions from any and all who surround us. Resistance of this foreign pressure is our only safeguard, and is essential to virtue. All virtue lies in individual action, in inward energy, in self-determination. There is no moral worth in being swept away by a crowd, even towards the best objects. We must act from an inward spring. The good, as well as the bad, may injure us, if, through that intolerance which is a common infirmity of the good, they impose on us authoritatively their own convictions, and obstruct our own intellectual and moral activity. A state of society, in which correct habits prevail, may produce in many, a mechanical regularity and religion, which is anything but virtue. Nothing morally great or good springs from mere sympathy and imitation. These principles will only forge chains for us, and perpetuate our infancy, unless more and more controlled and subdued by that inward lawgiver and judge, whose authority is from God, and whose sway over our whole nature, alone secures its free, glorious, and everlasting expansion.

The truth is, and we need to feel it most deeply, that our connexion with society, as it is our greatest aid, so it is our greatest peril. We are in constant danger of being spoiled of our moral judgment, and of our power over ourselves; and in losing these, we lose the chief prerogatives of spiritual beings. We sink, as far as mind can sink, into the world of matter, the chief distinction of which is, that it wants self-motion, or moves only from foreign impulse. The propensity in our fellow-creatures, which we have most to dread, is that, which, though most severely condemned by Jesus, is yet the most frequent infirmity of his followers; we mean, the propensity to rule, to tyrannise, to war with the freedom of their equals, to make themselves standards for other minds, to be law-givers instead of brethren

and friends to their race. Our great and most difficult duty as social beings, is, to derive constant aid from society without taking its yoke; to open our minds to the thoughts, reasonings, and persuasions of others, and yet to hold fast the sacred right of private judgment; to receive impulses from our fellow-beings, and yet to act from our own souls; to sympathise with others, and yet to determine our own feelings; to act with others, and yet to follow our own consciences; to unite social deference and self-dominion; to join moral self-subsistence with social dependence; to respect others without losing self-respect; to love our friends, and to reverence our superiors, whilst our supreme homage is given to that moral perfection which no friend and no superior has realised, and which, if faithfully pursued, will often demand separation from all around us. Such is our great work as social beings, and to perform it, we should look habitually to Jesus Christ, who was distinguished by nothing more than by moral independence, than by resisting and overcoming the world.

The reverence for our own moral nature, on which we have now insisted, needs earnest and perpetual inculcation. This virtue finds few aids from abroad. All religions and governments have more or less warred with it. Even that religion which came from God to raise man to a moral empire over himself, has been seized on by the selfish and intolerant principles of human nature, and all its sanctions been brought to bear against that free, independent action of thought and conscience, which it was chiefly intended to promote. In truth, men need to be instructed in nothing more than in what they owe to their own spiritual faculties. The sacredness of the moral principle in every human breast; its divine right of dominion; the jealousy with which it ought to be protected against our own passions, and the usurpations of society; the watchful care with which it should be unfolded, refined, and fortified, by communion with ourselves, with great and good minds, with that brightest manifestation of God, Jesus Christ, and with God himself; the awe with which its deliberate dictates should be heard; the energy which it may, and

should put forth in opposition to pleasure and pain, to human frowns or smiles; the sublime tranquillity to which it may ascend; the conscious union with God which it may attain, and through which it seems to partake of his omnipotence; these prerogatives of the moral nature, of that element and spark of Divinity in the soul, are almost forgotten in the condition of servitude to which the multitude are reduced by the joint tyranny of the passions and of society.

It is interesting and encouraging to observe, that the enslaving power of society over the mind is decreasing, through what would seem at first to threaten its enlargement; we mean, through the extension of social intercourse. This is a distinction of our age, and one of its chief means of improvement. Men are widening their bounds, exchanging thoughts and feelings with fellow-beings far and wide, with inhabitants of other countries, with subjects of other governments, with professors of other modes of faith. Distant nations are brought near, and are acting on one another with a new power; and the result is, that these differing and often hostile influences balance or neutralise one another, and almost compel the intellect to act, to compare, to judge, to frame itself. This we deem an immense benefit of the multiplication of books at the present day. The best books contain errors, and deserve a very limited trust. But wherever men of thought and genius publish freely, they will perpetually send forth new views, to keep alive the intellectual action of the world; will give a frequent shock to received opinions; will lead men to contemplate great subjects from new positions, and by thus awakening individual and independent energy will work higher good than by the knowledge which they spread. The same effect is to be anticipated from the study of different languages, which occupies more and more space in our systems of education; and we believe this to be the happiest effect. A great man used to say, that in learning a new language, he had gained a new soul, so fresh and original were the views which it opened to him. A new language, considered in itself, or without reference to the writings which it contains, seems

to us a valuable possession, on account of the new combinations of thought which its vocabulary presents; and when regarded as the key to the minds of a people, whose institutions, education, climate, temperament, religion, and history, differ from our own, and in whom, of consequence, our common nature is taking a new form, it is, to one who has power to understand its use, an invaluable acquisition. In truth, we cannot express too strongly the importance we attach to an enlarged intercourse with other minds, considered as the means of freeing and quickening our own. This is the chief good of extensive institutions for education. They place us under diversified social influences; connect us with the dead as well as with the living; accumulate for us the thoughts of all ages and nations; take us out of the narrow circle of a neighbourhood, or church, or community; make us fellow-citizens with the friends of truth under the whole heaven, and, through these various and often hostile influences, aid and encourage us to that independent moral judgment, and intellectual discrimination, by which our views are more and more purified and enlarged.

We regret that religion has not done more to promote this enlarged intercourse of minds, the great means, as we have seen, of reconciling social aids with personal independence. As yet, religion has generally assumed a sectarian form, and its disciples, making narrowness a matter of conscience, have too often shunned connexion with men of different views as a pestilence, and yielded their minds to the exclusive influences of the leaders and teachers of their separate factions. Indeed, we fear that in no department of life has the social principle been perverted more into an instrument of intellectual thraldom, than in religion. We could multiply proofs without end, but will content ourselves with a single illustration drawn from what are called "revivals of religion." We have many objections to these as commonly conducted; but nothing offends us more than their direct and striking tendency to overwhelm the mind with foreign influences, and to strip it of all self-direction. In these feverish seasons, religion, or

what bears the name, is spread as by contagion, and to escape it is almost as difficult as to avoid a raging epidemic. Whoever knows anything of human nature, knows the effect of excitement in a crowd. When systematically prolonged and urged onward, it subverts deliberation and self-control. The individual is lost in the mass, and borne away as in a whirlwind. The prevalent emotion, be it love or hatred, terror or enthusiasm, masters every mind, which is not fortified by a rare energy, or secured by a rare insensibility. In revivals, a multitude are subjected at once to strong emotions, which are swelled and perpetuated by the most skilful management. The individual is never suffered to escape the grasp of the leading or subordinate agents in the work.* A machinery of social influences, of "inquiry meetings," of "anxious meetings," of conferences, of prayer meetings, of perpetual private or public impulses, is brought to bear on the diseased subject, until, exhausted in body and mind, he becomes the passive, powerless recipient of whatever form or impressions it may be thought fit to give him. Happily for mankind, our nature loses its sensibility to perpetual stimulants, and of consequence a revival is succeeded by what is called "a dull, dead, stupid season." This dull time is a merciful repose granted by Providence to the overwrought and oppressed mind, and gives some chance for calm, deliberate, individual thought and action. Thus the kindness of nature is perpetually counterworking the excesses of men, and a religion, which begins in partial insanity, is often seen to attain by degrees to the calmness and dignity of reason.

In the preceding remarks we have stated, at greater length than we intended, our views of the true and

* We recollect seeing the following direction gravely given for managing revivals, in the book of a minister experienced in this work:—"Be careful never to kindle more fires than you can tend." In other words, Do not awaken and alarm more persons than you can place under constant inspection, and beset with perpetual excitements. What a strange rule for persons who profess to believe that these "fires" are "kindled" supernaturally by the Holy Spirit!

highest benefits of society. These seem to us great, unspeakably great. At the same time, like all other goods, they are accompanied with serious perils. Society too often oppresses the energy which it was meant to quicken and exalt.—We now pass to our principal subject; to the associations for public purposes, whether benevolent, moral, or religious, which are so multiplied in the present age. And here we must confine ourselves to two remarks; the first intended to assign to such associations their proper place or rank, and the second, to suggest a principle, by which useful societies may be distinguished from such as are pernicious, and by which we may be aided in distributing among them our favour and patronage.

Our first remark is, that we should beware of confounding together, as of equal importance, those associations which are formed by our Creator, which spring from our very constitution, and are inseparable from our being, and those of which we are now treating, which man invents for particular times and exigencies. Let us never place our weak, short-sighted contrivances on a level with the arrangements of God. We have acknowledged the infinite importance of society to the developement of human powers and affections. But when we speak thus of society, we mean chiefly the relations in which God has placed us; we mean the connexions of family, of neighbourhood, of country, and the great bond of humanity, uniting us with our whole kind, and not Missionary societies, Peace societies, or Charitable societies, which men have contrived. These last have their uses, and some do great good; but they are no more to be compared with the societies in which nature places us, than the torches which we kindle on earth in the darkness of night, are to be paralleled with the all-pervading and all-glorifying light of the sun. We make these remarks, because nothing is more common than for men to forget the value of what is familiar, natural, and universal, and to ascribe undue importance to what is extraordinary, forced, and rare, and therefore striking. Artificial associations have their use, but are not to be named with those of nature; and to these last, therefore, we are to give our chief regard.

We can easily illustrate, by examples, the inferiority of human associations. In Boston, there are two Asylums for children, which deserve, we think, a high place among useful institutions. Not a little time is spent upon them. Hundreds conspire to carry them on, and we have anniversaries to collect crowds for their support. And what is the amount of good accomplished? Between one or two hundred children are provided for, a number worthy of all the care bestowed on these charities. But compare this number with all the children of this city, with the thousands who throng our streets and our schools. And how are these fed, clothed, educated? We hear of no subscriptions, no anniversaries for their benefit; yet how they flourish compared with the subjects of Asylums! These are provided for by that unostentatious and unpraised society, which God has instituted—a family. That shelter, home, which nature rears, protects them, and it is an establishment worth infinitely more than all the institutions, great or small, which man has devised. In truth, just as far as this is improved, as its duties are performed, and its blessings prized, all artificial institutions are superseded. Here then is the sphere for the agency of the wise and good. Improve the family, strengthen and purify the relations of domestic life, and more is done for the happiness and progress of the race than by the most splendid charities.—Let us take another example, the Hospital in the same metropolis; a noble institution, worthy of high praise. But where is it that the sick of our city are healed? Must you look for them in the Hospital? You may find there perhaps, and should rejoice to find there, fifty or sixty beds for the poor. The thousands who sicken and die among us, are to be found in their homes, watched over by the nursing care of mothers and sisters, surrounded by that tenderness which grows up only at home.—Let us take another example, Missionary societies. This whole country is thrown into excitement to support missions. The rich are taxed, and the poor burdened. We do not say that they are burdened without object; for Christianity is so infinite a blessing, that we consent to any honest

methods of sending it abroad. But what is the amount of good effected? A few missionaries, we know not the precise number, are supported, of whom most have hitherto brought little to pass. Who can compare associations for this object, with churches, or those congregations of neighbours for regular worship, which Christianity has instituted, and to which nature has always prompted the professors of the same faith? Through these, incalculable aid is given to the support and diffusion of Christianity; and yet, through the propensity of human nature to exaggerate what is forced and artificial, one missionary at a distance is thought of more importance than a hundred ministers near, and the sending of him abroad is extolled as an incomparably greater exploit of piety, than the support of our own places of worship. We mean not to discourage Missionary societies; but the truth is, that Christianity is to be diffused incomparably more by caring for and promoting it in our natural relations, in our homes, in our common circles and churches, than by institutions endowed with the revenues of nations for sending it to distant lands. The great obstruction to Christianity among foreign nations, is, its inoperativeness among the nations which profess it. We offer others a religion, which, in their apprehension, has done the givers no great good. The true course is, to rely less on our own machinery of Cent societies, and National societies, and to rely more on the connexions and arrangements of nature or of God.

We beg not to be misunderstood. We would on no account discourage the Asylum, the Hospital, the Missionary society. All receive our cheerful support. We only mean to say, that our great sources of improvement and happiness, are our natural relations and associations, and that to understand these better, and to attach ourselves more faithfully to their duties, are the great social means of carrying forward the world. A striking confirmation of these remarks may be found in the Romish Church. The probability is, that under the Catholic religion in the dark ages, there were larger contributions to the relief of the distressed, in proportion to

the wealth of communities, than at present, and contributions by associations which regarded alms-giving as one of their main duties; we mean the monasteries. But the monks, who quitted the relations of nature, the society which God had instituted, in order to form new and artificial bonds, more favourable, as they thought, to doing good, made a sad mistake. Their own characters were injured, and the very charities doled out from convents, increased the beggary which they hoped to relieve. So sacred is nature, that it cannot be trampled on with impunity. We fear that something similar to the error just noticed among Catholics, is spreading among Protestants; the error of exalting societies of human device above our natural relations. We have been told that cases occur among us, and are not rare, in which domestic claims on kindness are set aside for the sake of making contributions to our great societies, and especially to foreign missions. So possessed are the minds of multitudes with the supreme importance of this object, that there seems to them a piety in withholding what would otherwise have been thought due to a poor relative, that it may be sent across oceans to Pagan lands. We have heard that delicate kindnesses, which once flowed from the more prosperous to the less prosperous members of a large family, and which bound society together by that love which is worth all bonds, are diminished since the late excitement in favour of the heathen. And this we do not wonder at. In truth, we rather wonder that anything is done for the temporal comfort of friends, where the doctrine on which modern missions chiefly rest, is believed. We refer to the doctrine, that the whole heathen world are on the brink of a bottomless and endless hell; that thousands every day, and millions every year, are sinking into this abyss of torture and woe; and that nothing can save them but sending them our religion. We see not how they who so believe, can give their families or friends, a single comfort, much less an ornament of life. They must be strongly tempted, one would think, to stint themselves and their dependents to necessaries, and to cast their whole remaining substance into the treasury of missionary societies.

We repeat it, let us not be misunderstood. Missionary societies, established on just principles, do honour to a Christian community. We regard them with any feeling but that of hostility. The readers of this work cannot have forgotten the earnestness with which we recommended the support of a mission in India, at a time when we thought that peculiar circumstances invited exertion in that quarter. We only oppose the preference of these institutions to the natural associations and connexions of life. An individual who thinks that he is doing a more religious act in contributing to a missionary society, than in doing a needful act of kindness to a relative, friend, or neighbour, is leaving a society of God's institution, for one of man's making. He shows a perverted judgment in regard to the duties of his religion and in regard to the best means of spreading it. All that has been done, or ever will or can be done by associations for diffusing Christianity, is a mere drop of the bucket, compared with what is done silently, and secretly, by the common daily duties of Christians in their families, neighbourhoods, and business. The surest way of spreading Christianity, is, to improve Christian communities; and accordingly, he who frees this religion from corruption, and makes it a more powerful instrument of virtue where it is already professed, is the most effectual contributor to the great work of its diffusion through the world.

We now proceed to our second remark, in which we proposed to suggest a principle, by which the claims of different associations may be estimated. It is this:—The value of associations is to be measured by the energy, the freedom, the activity, the moral power, which they encourage and diffuse. In truth, the great object of all benevolence, is, to give power, activity, and freedom to others. We cannot, in the strict sense of the word, *make* any being happy. We can give others the *means* of happiness, together with motives to the faithful use of them; but on this faithfulness, on the free and full exercise of their own powers, their happiness depends. There is thus a fixed, impassable limit to human benevolence. It can only make men happy through

themselves, through their own freedom, and energy. We go further. We believe that God has set the same limit to his own benevolence. He makes no being happy, in any other sense than in that of giving him means, powers, motives, and a field for exertion. We have here we think the great consideration to guide us in judging of associations. Those are good which communicate power, moral and intellectual action, and the capacity of useful efforts to the persons who form them, or to the persons on whom they act. On the other hand, associations which in any degree impair or repress the free and full action of men's powers, are so far hurtful. On this principle, associations for restoring to men health, strength, the use of their limbs, the use of their senses, especially of sight and hearing, are highly to be approved, for such enlarge men's powers; whilst charitable associations, which weaken in men the motives to exertion, which offer a bounty to idleness, or make beggary as profitable as labour, are great calamities to society, and peculiarly calamitous to those whom they relieve. On the same principle, associations which are designed to awaken the human mind, to give to men of all classes a consciousness of their intellectual powers, to communicate knowledge of a useful and quickening character, to encourage men in thinking with freedom and vigour, to inspire an ardent love and pursuit of truth—are most worthy of patronage; whilst such as are designed or adapted to depress the human intellect, to make it dependent and servile, to keep it where it is, to give a limited amount of knowledge, but not to give impulse and an onward motion to men's thoughts—all such associations, however benevolent their professions, should be regarded as among the foes and obstructions to the best interests of society. On the same principle, associations aiming to purify and ennoble the character of a people, to promote true virtue, a rational piety, a disinterested charity, a wise temperance, and especially aiming to accomplish these ends by the only effectual means, that is by calling forth men's own exertions for a higher knowledge of God and duty, and for a new and growing control of themselves—

such institutions are among the noblest; whilst no encouragement is due to such as aim to make men religious and virtuous by paralysing their minds through terror, by fastening on them a yoke of opinions or practices, by pouring upon them influences from abroad which virtually annihilate their power over themselves, and make them instruments for others to speak through, and to wield at pleasure. We beg our readers to carry with them the principle now laid down in judging of associations; to inquire, how far they are fitted to call forth energy, active talent, religious inquiry, a free and manly virtue. We insist on these remarks, because not a few associations seem to us exceedingly exceptionable on account of their tendency to fetter men, to repress energy, to injure the free action of individuals and society, and because this tendency lurks, and is to be guarded against, even in good institutions. On this point we cannot but enlarge; for we deem it of the highest importance.

Associations often injure free action by a very plain and obvious operation. They accumulate power in a few hands, and this takes place just in proportion to the surface over which they spread. In a large institution, a few men rule, a few do everything; and if the institution happens to be directed to objects about which conflict and controversy exist, a few are able to excite in the mass strong and bitter passions, and by these to obtain an immense ascendency. Through such an association, widely spread, yet closely connected by party feeling, a few leaders can send their voices and spirit far and wide, and, where great funds are accumulated, can league a host of instruments, and by menace and appeals to interest, can silence opposition. Accordingly, we fear that in this country, an influence is growing up through widely spread societies, altogether at war with the spirit of our institutions, and which, unless jealously watched, will gradually but surely encroach on freedom of thought, of speech, and of the press. It is very striking to observe, how, by such combinations, the very means of encouraging a free action of men's minds may be turned against it. We all esteem the

press as the safeguard of our liberties, as the power which is to quicken intellect by giving to all minds an opportunity to act on all. Now, by means of Tract societies, spread over a whole community, and acting under a central body, a few individuals, perhaps not more than twenty, may determine the chief reading for a great part of the children of the community, and for a majority of the adults, and may deluge our country with worthless sectarian writings, fitted only to pervert its taste, degrade its intellect, and madden it with intolerance. Let associations devoted to any objects which excite the passions, be everywhere spread and leagued together for mutual support, and nothing is easier than to establish a control over newspapers. We are persuaded that by an artful multiplication of societies, devoted apparently to different objects, but all swayed by the same leaders, and all intended to bear against a hated party, as cruel a persecution may be carried on in a free country as in a despotism. Public opinion may be so combined, and inflamed, and brought to bear on odious individuals or opinions, that it will be as perilous to think and speak with manly freedom, as if an inquisition were open before us. It is now discovered that the way to rule in this country, is by an array of numbers, which a prudent man will not like to face. Of consequence, all associations aiming or tending to establish sway by numbers, ought to be opposed. They create tyrants as effectually as standing armies. Let them be withstood from the beginning. No matter whether the opinions which they intend to put down be true or false. Let no opinion be put down by such means. Let not error be suppressed by an instrument, which will be equally powerful against truth, and which must subvert that freedom of thought on which all truth depends. Let the best end fail, if it cannot be accomplished by right and just means. For example, we would have criminals punished, but punished in the proper way, and by a proper authority. It were better that they should escape, than be imprisoned or executed by any man who may think fit to assume the office; for sure we are, that by this summary justice, the innocent would soon suffer more than the guilty.

and on the same principle, we cannot consent that what we deem error should be crushed by the joint cries and denunciations of vast societies directed by the tyranny of a few; for truth has more to dread from such weapons than falsehood, and we know no truth against which they may not be successfully turned. In this country, few things are more to be dreaded, than organizations or institutions by which public opinion may be brought to bear tyrannically against individuals or sects. From the nature of things, public opinion is often unjust; but when it is not embodied and fixed by pledged societies, it easily relents, it may receive new impulses, it is open to influences from the injured. On the contrary, when shackled and stimulated by vast associations, it is in danger of becoming a steady, unrelenting tyrant, browbeating the timid, proscribing the resolute, silencing free speech, and virtually denying the dearest religious and civil rights. We say not that all great associations *must* be thus abused. We know that some are useful. We know, too, that there are cases, in which it is important that public opinion should be condensed, or act in a mass. We feel, however, that the danger of great associations is increased by the very fact, that they are sometimes useful. They are perilous instruments. They ought to be suspected. They are a kind of irregular government created within our constitutional government. Let them be watched closely. As soon as we find them resolved or disposed to bear down a respectable man or set of men, or to force on the community measures about which wise and good men differ, let us feel that a dangerous engine is at work among us, and oppose to it our steady and stern disapprobation.

We have spoken of the tendency of great institutions to accumulate power in a few hands. These few they make more active; but they tend to produce dependence, and to destroy self-originated action in the vast multitudes who compose them, and this is a serious injury. Few comprehend the extent of this evil. Individual action is the highest good. What we want, is, that men should do right more and more from their own minds, and less and less from imitation, from a foreign

impulse, from sympathy with a crowd. This is the kind of action which we recommend. Would you do good according to the Gospel? Do it secretly, silently; so silently that the left hand will not know what the right hand doeth. This precept does not favour the clamorous and far published efforts of a leagued multitude. We mean not to sever men from others in well-doing, for we have said, there are many good objects which can only be accomplished by numbers. But generally speaking, we can do most good by individual action, and our own virtue is incomparably more improved by it. It is vastly better, for example, that we should give our own money with our own hands, from our own judgment, and through personal interest in the distresses of others, than that we should send it by a substitute. Second-hand charity is not as good to the giver or receiver as immediate. There are, indeed, urgent cases where we cannot act immediately, or cannot alone do the good required. There let us join with others; but where we can do good secretly, and separately, or only with some dear friend, we shall almost certainly put forth in this way more of intellect and heart, more of sympathy and strenuous purpose, and shall awaken more of virtuous sensibility in those whom we relieve, than if we were to be parts of a multitude in accomplishing the same end. Individual action is the great point to be secured. That man alone understands the true use of society, who learns from it to act more and more from his own deliberate conviction, to think more for himself, to be less swayed by numbers, to rely more on his own powers. One good action, springing from our own minds, performed from a principle within, performed without the excitement of an urging and approving voice from abroad, is worth more than hundreds which grow from mechanical imitation, or from the heat and impulse which numbers give us. In truth, all great actions are solitary ones. All the great works of genius come from deep, lonely thought. The writings which have quickened, electrified, regenerated the human mind, did not spring from associations. That is most valuable which is individual; which is marked by what is peculiar and characteristic

in him who accomplishes it. In truth, associations are chiefly useful by giving means and opportunities to gifted individuals to act out their own minds. A Missionary society achieves little good, except when it can send forth an individual who wants no teaching or training from the society, but who carries his commission and chief power in his own soul. We urge this, for we feel that we are all in danger of sacrificing our individuality and independence to our social connexions. We dread new social trammels. They are too numerous already. From these views we learn, that there is cause to fear and to withstand great associations, as far as they interfere with, or restrain individual action, personal independence, private judgment, free, self-originated effort. We do fear, from not a few associations which exist, that power is to be accumulated in the hands of a few, and a servile, tame, dependent spirit, to be generated in the many. Such is the danger of our times, and we are bound as Christians and freemen to withstand it.

We have now laid down the general principles, which, as we think, are to be applied to associations for public objects. Another part of our work remains. We propose to offer some remarks on a few societies, which at this time demand our patronage, or excite particular attention. In doing this, we shall speak with our customary freedom; but we beg that we may not be understood as censuring the motives of those whose plans and modes of operation we condemn.

The associations for suppressing Intemperance form an interesting feature of our times. Their object is of undoubted utility, and unites the hearts of all good men. They aim to suppress an undoubted and gross vice, to free its victims from the worst bondage, to raise them from brutal degradation to the liberty and happiness of men. There is one strong presumption in favour of the means which they have used. We have never heard of their awakening enmity and counteraction. In one particular, some of them may have erred. We refer to the compact formed by their members for abstaining from wine. When we consider, that wine is universally acknowledged to be an innocent, and often salutary

beverage, that Jesus sanctioned its use by miraculously increasing it at the marriage feast, that the Scriptures teach us to thank God for it as a good gift, intended to "gladden the heart of man," and when to these considerations we add, that wine countries are distinguished for temperance, we are obliged to regard this pledge as injudicious; and we regret it, because it may bring distrust and contempt on an excellent institution, and because its abandonment, for it cannot long continue, may be construed by some as a warrant for returning to inebriating liquors. In one view, the success of the efforts against intemperance affords us peculiar satisfaction. It demonstrates a truth, little felt, but infinitely precious; namely, the recoverableness of human nature from the lowest depths of vice. It teaches us never to despair of a human being. It teaches us, that there is always something to work on, a germ to be unfolded, a spark which may be cherished, in the human soul. Intemperance is the most hopeless state into which a man can fall; and yet, instances of recovery from this vice have rewarded the recent labours of the philanthropist. Let philanthropy then rejoice in the belief, that the capacity of improvement is never lost, and let it convert this conviction into new and more strenuous efforts for the recovery of the most depraved.

We proceed now to Bible societies. These need no advocates. Their object is so simple, unexceptionable, beneficent, that all Protestants, at least, concur in their support. By spreading the Bible without note or comment, they especially assert the right of private judgment, and are thus free from the great reproach of trenching on Christian freedom. Perhaps they have not always been conducted with sufficient prudence. We have particularly feared, that they might be open to the charge of indiscreet profusion. We believe it to be a good rule, that where the poor can give anything for a Bible, no matter how little, they should be encouraged and incited to pay this part of the price. We believe, that it will be more valued, and more carefully preserved, where it has cost something. We do not think of the Bible, as the superstitious among Catholics

and heathens do of relics and charms, as if its mere presence in a family were a necessary good. We wish some pledge that it will be treated with respect, and we fear that this respect has been diminished by the lavishness with which it has been bestowed. One cause of the evil is, that societies, like individuals, have a spice of vanity, and love to make a fair show in their annual reports; and accordingly they are apt to feel as if a favour were conferred, when their books are taken off their hands. We think that to secure respect to the Bible is even more important than to distribute it widely. For this purpose, its exterior should be attractive. It should be printed in a fair large type, should be well bound, and be provided with a firm case. This last provision seems to us especially important. The poor have no book-cases. Their Bibles too often lie on the same shelves with their domestic utensils: nor can it be doubted, that when soiled, torn, dishonoured by this exposure, they are regarded with less respect, than if protected with peculiar care.

We have a still more important remark to make in reference to Bible societies. In our last number, we noticed an edition of the New Testament recently published in Boston, and differing from those in common use, by a new translation of those passages of the Greek original, of which the true reading was lost or neglected when the received English version was made. This edition of the New Testament we stated to be undoubtedly more correct, more conformed to the original, than our common editions. On this point we speak strongly, because we wish to call to it the attention of Bible societies, and of all conscientious Christians. To such we say—Here is a translation, undoubtedly more faithful to the original than that in common use. You have here in greater purity what Jesus Christ said, and what his Apostles wrote; and if so, you are bound by your allegiance to Christ to substitute this for the common translation. We know, that uneducated Christians cannot settle this question. We therefore respectfully, and with solemnity, solicit for it the attention of learned men, of Christian ministers, of professors of theology of every sect

and name. We ask for the calmest and most deliberate investigation, and if, as we believe, there shall be but one opinion as to the claims of the version which we have recommended; if all must acknowledge that it renders more faithfully the words of the inspired and authorised teachers of Christianity, then we see not how it can be denied the reception and diffusion which it deserves. We conceive, that, to Bible societies, this is a great question, and not to be evaded without unfaithfulness to our common Master, and without disrespect to the holy Scriptures. We fear that there is a want of conscientiousness on this subject. We fear that the British and Foreign Bible Society has forfeited, in a measure, its claims to the gratitude and admiration of the church, by neglecting to secure the greatest possible accuracy and fidelity to the new translations which they have sent forth. We hear continual expressions of reverence for the Bible; but the most unambiguous proofs of it, we mean, unwearied efforts to purify it from human additions, mutilations, and corruptions, remain to be given.

Before leaving the consideration of Bible societies, we cannot but refer to a very singular transaction in relation to the Scriptures, in which some of them are thought to be implicated. In some of our cities and villages, we are told, that the rich as well as the poor have been visited for the purpose of ascertaining whether they own the Bible. The object of this domiciliary investigation we profess not to understand. We cannot suppose, that it was intended to lavish on the rich the funds which were contributed for spreading the Scriptures among the poor. One thing we know, that a measure more likely to irritate and to be construed into an insult, could not easily be contrived. As a sign of the times it deserves our notice. After this step, it ought not to surprise us should an Inquisition be established, to ascertain, who among us observe, and who neglect the duties of private and family prayer. We might smile at this spirit, could we tell where it would stop. But it is essentially prying, restless, and encroaching, and its first movements ought to be withstood.

We now proceed to another class of associations;

those which are designed to promote the observance of the Sabbath. The motives which gave birth to these, we respect. But we doubt the rectitude and usefulness of the object, and we fear that what has begun in conscientiousness may end in intolerance and oppression. We cannot say of these associations, as of those which we have just noticed, that they aim at an unquestionable good, about which all good men agree. Not a few of the wisest and best men dissent from the principle on which these societies are built, namely, that the Jewish Sabbath is binding on Christians. Not a few of the profoundest divines and most exemplary followers of Christ have believed and still believe, that the Sabbath enjoined in the fourth commandment, is a part of Judaism, and not of the Gospel; that it is essentially different from the Lord's-day, and that to enforce it on Christians, is to fall into that error which Paul withstood even unto death, the error of adulterating Christianity by mixtures of a preparatory and very inferior religion.

We beg to be understood. All Christians, whom we know, concur in the opinion and the desire, that the Lord's-day, or the first day of the week, should be separated to the commemoration of Christ's resurrection, to public worship, to public Christian instruction, and in general to what are called the means of religion. This we gratefully accept and honour as a Christian rite. But not a few believe that the Lord's-day and the ancient Sabbath are not the same institution, and ought not to be confounded; that the former is of a nobler character, and more important than the latter, and that the mode of observing it is to be determined by the spirit and purposes of Christianity, and not by any preceding law. This is a question about which Christians have differed for ages. We certainly wish that it may be debated till it is settled. But we grieve to see a questionable doctrine made the foundation of large societies, and to see Christians leagued to pass the sentence of irreligion on men equally virtuous with themselves, and who perhaps better understand the mind of Christ in regard to the Sabbath.

We know that it is confidently affirmed, that God,

at an earlier period than the Jewish law, enjoined the Sabbath as a perpetual, universal, irrepealable law for the whole human race. But can this position be sustained? For ourselves we cannot see a trace of it in the Scriptures, those only sure records of God's revelation to mankind. We do indeed incline to believe, what many wise men have questioned, that there are appearances of the institution of the Sabbath at the beginning of the human race. We know that these are faint and few; yet we attach importance to them, because nature and reason favour the supposition of a time having been set apart from the first as a religious memorial. Whilst, however, we incline to this view as most probable, we see no proofs of the perpetuity of the institution in the circumstance of its early origin. On the contrary, an ordinance or rite, given in the infancy of the human race, may be presumed to be temporary, unless its unchangeableness is expressly taught, or is necessarily implied in its very nature. The positive or ritual religion, which was adapted to the earlier, can hardly suit the maturer periods of the race. Man is a progressive being, and needs a progressive religion. It is one of the most interesting and beautiful features of the Sacred Writings, and one of the strong evidences of their truth, that they reveal religion as a growing light, and manifest the Divine Legislator as adapting himself to the various and successive conditions of the world. Allowing then the Sabbath to have been given to Adam, we could no more infer its perpetuity, than we can infer the perpetuity of capital punishment, as an ordinance of God, because he said to Noah, the second parent of the human race, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Our opinion leans, as we have said, to the early institution of the Sabbath; but we repeat it, the presumptions on which our judgments rest are too uncertain to authorise confidence, much less denunciation. The greater part of the early Fathers of the Church, according to Calmet, believed that the law of the Sabbath was not given before Moses; and this, as we have observed, is the opinion of some of the most judicious and

pious Christians of later times. Whilst disposed to differ from these, we feel that the subject is to be left to the calm decision of individuals. We want no array of numbers to settle a doubtful question. One thing is plain, that before Moses, not one precept is given in relation to the Sabbath, nor a hint of its unchangeableness to the end of the world. One thing is plain, that the question of the perpetuity of this institution is to be settled by the teachings of Jesus Christ, the great prophet, who alone is authorised to determine how far the institutions of religion which preceded him, are binding on his followers. For ourselves, we are followers of Christ, and not of Moses, or Noah, or Adam. We call ourselves Christians, and the Gospel is our only rule. Nothing in the Old Testament binds us, any further than it is recognised by, or incorporated into the New. The great and only question, then, is, Does the New Testament, does Christianity, impose on us the ancient Sabbath?

To aid us in settling this question, we may first inquire into the nature and design of this institution; and nothing can be plainer. Words cannot make it clearer. According to the Old Testament, the seventh, or last day of the week, was to be set apart, or sanctified, as a day of rest, in commemoration of God's having rested on that day from the work of creation.* The distinguish-

* We beg our readers to observe, that we are now simply stating the account of the Sabbath which is given in the Old Testament. How this account is to be interpreted, is a question not involved in our present subject. We would however observe, that the rest here ascribed to God must be understood in a figurative sense. Properly speaking, God, who is incapable of fatigue, and whose almighty agency is unceasing, never rests. In finishing the work of creation, he did not sink into repose, or for a moment desist from the exercise of his omnipotence. A particular mode of his agency was discontinued; and, in accommodation to an uncultivated age, this discontinuance was called rest. It seems to us, that the Sabbath bears one mark of a temporary institution, in the fact of its being founded on a representation of God, which is true only in a figurative or popular sense, and which gives something like a shock to a mind, which has exalted its conceptions of the Divinity. Such an institution does not carry the impress of a perpetual and universal law.

ing feature of the institution, is rest. The word Sabbath means rest. The event to be commemorated was rest. The reason for selecting the seventh, was, that this had been to the Creator a day of rest. The chief method prescribed for sanctifying the day was rest. The distinctive character of the institution could not have been more clearly expressed. Whoever reads the fourth commandment, will see, that no mode of setting apart the day to God, is there prescribed, except in imitation of his rest. How far this constituted the sanctification of the Sabbath, will be seen from such passages as the following:—"You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death. For whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people."* A still more remarkable proof, that the sanctification of the Sabbath consisted in resting after the example of God, is furnished by Christ, who says, that "on the Sabbath-days the priests in the Temple *profane* the Sabbath."† So essential was rest to the hallowing of that day, that the work of offering victims, though prescribed by God himself, is said to profane it. There are indeed some expressions of Moses, indicating other methods of observing the day, for he calls it "a holy convocation;" but whether this phrase applies to other places beside the Temple, is uncertain. It is not improbable, indeed, that the people resorted to the Levites and Prophets on the Sabbath rather than other days; but we find no precept to this effect; and it is well known that no synagogues or places of worship were built through Judea, until after the captivity. Rest, then, was the great distinction of the day. This constituted it a memorial, and gave it its name; and we conceive that the chief stress was laid on this circumstance, because the Sabbath was intended to answer a humane, as well as religious end; that is, to give relief to persons in servitude, and to inferior animals, a provision very much needed in an unrefined and semi-barbarous age, when slavery had no acknowledged rights,

* Exod. xxxi. 14; also Jer. xvii. 22. † Matt. xii. 5.

and when little mercy was shown to man or beast. conformity to these views, we find the Jewish nati always regarding the Sabbath as a joyful day, a festiv In the time of Christ, we find him bidden to a fe on the Sabbath-day, and accepting the invitatio and our impression is, that now, as in past times, t Jews divide the day between the synagogue and soc enjoyment.

The nature and end of the Sabbath cannot be eas misunderstood. It was the seventh or last day of t week, set apart by God as a day of rest, in imitati and in commemoration of his having rested on th day from the creation. That other religious observan were with great propriety introduced into the day, a that they were multiplied with the progress of the nati we do not doubt. But the distinctive observance, a the only one expressly enjoined on the whole peop was rest. Now we ask, Is the dedication of the seve or last day of the week to rest, in remembrance of Go resting on that day, a part of the Christian religio The answer seems to us plain. We affirm, in the fi place, what none will contradict, that this institution not enjoined in the New Testament, even by the fai est hint or implication; and in the next place, maintain that the Christian world, so far from findi it there, have by their practice disowned its authorit

This last position may startle some of our reade But it is not therefore less true. We maintain that t Christian world have in practice disowned the obli tion of the Sabbath established by the fourth comma ment. There is indeed a body of Christians call Sabbatarians, who strictly and religiously observe t fourth commandment. But they are a handful; th are lost, swallowed up in the immense majority of Chr tians, who have for ages ceased to observe the Sabb prescribed from Sinai. True, Christians have th sacred day, which they call a Sabbath. But is it truth the ancient Sabbath? We say, no; and we c attention to this point. The ancient Sabbath, as

* Luke xiv.

have seen, was the last day of the week, set apart for rest, in commemoration of God's resting on that day. And is the first day of the week a day observed in remembrance of Christ's resurrection from the dead, the same institution with this? Can broader marks between two ordinances be conceived? Is it possible that they can be confounded? Is not the ancient Sabbath renounced by the Christian world? Have we not thus the testimony of the Christian world to its having passed away? Who of us can consistently plead for it as a universal and perpetual law?

We know, that it is said, that the ancient Sabbath remains untouched; that Christianity has only removed it from the last to the first day of the week, and that this is a slight, unessential change, leaving the old institution whole and unbroken. To this we have several replies. In the first place, this change of days, which Christianity is supposed to make, is not unessential, but vital, and subversive of the ancient institution. The end of the ancient Sabbath was the commemoration of God's resting from his works, and for this end, the very day of the week on which he rested, was most wisely selected. Now we maintain, that to select the first day of the week, the very day on which he began his works, and to select and separate this in commemoration of another event, of Christ's resurrection, is wholly to set aside the ancient Sabbath. We cannot conceive of a more essential departure from the original ordinance. This substitution, as it is called, is a literal as well as virtual abolition. Such is our first remark.—We say, secondly, that not a word is uttered in the New Testament of the first day being substituted for the seventh. Surely so striking a change would not have been made in a universal and perpetual law of God, without some warning. We ask for some hint of this modification of the fourth commandment. We find not a syllable.—We say, thirdly, that the first Christians knew nothing of this substitution. Our evidence here is complete. The first converts to Christianity were Jews, and these converts had at first no conception of the design of Christianity to supersede the law of Moses. This law

they continued to observe for years, and to observe it as rigorously as ever. When Paul visited Jerusalem, after many labours among the Gentiles, the elders said unto him, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law."* Of course they all observed the Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day of rest, the greatest of Jewish festivals, whilst, as we all believed, they honoured also the first day, the remembrancer of Christ's resurrection. This state of things existed for years in the primitive church. The two days were observed together. Nothing more seems necessary to disprove unanswerably the common doctrine, that the Apostles enjoined the substitution of the first for the seventh day.—We will add one more argument. Paul commands the Colossian Christians to disregard the censures of those who judged or condemned them for not observing the Sabbath. "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days."† This passage is very plain. It is evaded, however, by the plea, that the word "Sabbath" was used to express not only the seventh day, but other festivals or days of rest. But when we recollect that the word is used by Paul in this place without any exception or limitation, and that it was employed at that time, most frequently and almost wholly, to express the seventh day, or weekly Sabbath, we shall see, that we have the strongest reason for supposing this institution to be intended by the Apostle. That a Christian after reading this passage, should "judge," or condemn his brethren, for questioning or rejecting his particular notion of the Sabbath, is a striking proof of the slow progress of tolerant and liberal principles among men. We need not add, after these remarks, how unjustifiable we deem it to enforce particular modes of observing this day, by an array of associations.

Having thus stated what seem to us strong reasons against the perpetuity of the ancient Sabbath, perhaps some of our readers may wish to know our views of the

* Acts, xxi. 20. † Col. ii. 16.

Lord's-day, and although the subject may seem foreign to the present article, we will give our opinion in a few words. We believe, that the first day of the week is to be set apart for the public worship of God, and for the promotion of the knowledge and practice of Christianity, and that it was selected for this end in honour of the resurrection of Christ. To this view we are led by the following considerations:—Wherever the Gospel was preached, its professors were formed into churches or congregations, and ministers were appointed for their instruction or edification. Wherever Christianity was planted, societies for joint religious acts and improvement were instituted, as the chief means of establishing and diffusing it. Now it is plain, that for these purposes regular times must have been prescribed; and, accordingly, we find that it was the custom of the primitive Christians to hold their religious assemblies on the first day of the week, the day of Christ's resurrection. This we learn from the New Testament, and from the universal testimony of the earliest ages of the church. Wherever Christianity was spread, the first day was established as the season of Christian worship and instruction. Such are the grounds on which this institution rests. We regard it as altogether a *Christian institution*—as having its origin in the Gospel—as peculiar to the new dispensation; and we conceive that the proper observation of it is to be determined wholly by the spirit of Christianity. We meet in the New Testament no precise rules as to the mode of spending the Lord's-day, as to the mode of worship and teaching, as to the distribution of the time not given to public services. And this is just what might be expected; for the Gospel is not a religion of precise rules. It differs from Judaism in nothing more than in its free character. It gives great principles, broad views, general, prolific, all-comprehensive precepts, and entrusts the application of them to the individual. It sets before us the perfection of our nature, the spirit which we should cherish, the virtues which constitute "the kingdom of heaven within us," and leaves us to determine for ourselves, in a great measure, the discipline by which these noble ends are

to be secured. Let no man, then, bind what Christ has left free. The modes of worship and teaching on the Lord's-day are not prescribed, and who will say that they cannot be improved? One reason of the neglect and limited influence of this institution, is, that as now observed, it does not correspond sufficiently to the wants of our times; and we fear that it might even fall into contempt among the cultivated, should attempts be prosecuted to carry it back to the superstitious rigour by which it was degraded in a former age.

The associations for promoting the observance of the Sabbath, propose several objects, in which, to a certain extent, we heartily concur, but which, from their nature, are not susceptible of precise definition or regulation, and which, therefore, ought to be left, where Christianity has left them, to the consciences of individuals. They undoubtedly intend to discountenance labour on Sunday. Now, generally speaking, abstinence from labour seems to us a plain duty of the day; for we see not how its ends can otherwise be accomplished to any considerable extent. We do not believe, indeed, that this abstinence was rigidly practised by the first Christians at Jerusalem, who, as we have seen, gave up the seventh day to entire rest, and whose social duties could hardly have admitted the same appropriation of the following day. Neither do we believe that the converts who were made among the class of slaves in heathen countries, abstained from labour on the first day of the week; for, in so doing, they would have exposed themselves to the severest punishments, even to death, and we have no intimation that this portion of believers were regularly cut off by martyrdom. We know, however, that the early Christians, in proportion as they were relieved from the restrictions of Heathenism and Judaism, make the Lord's-day a season of abstinence from labour; and the arguments for so doing are so obvious and strong, that later Christians have concurred with them with hardly a dissenting voice. On this point there is, and can be, no difference. The change of Sunday into a working day, we should condemn as earnestly as any of our brethren. At the same

time, we feel, that in this particular, a Jewish rigour is not to be imposed on Christians, and that there are exigencies justifying toil on the first day, which must be left to individual judgment. The great purposes of this festival, may certainly be accomplished, without that scrupulous, anxious shunning of every kind of work, which marked a Jewish Sabbath, and which, however proper under a servile dispensation, and in an age of darkness, would be in us superstition. We do not, for example, think Christians bound to prepare on Saturday every meal for the following day, or to study through the week how to remove the necessity of every bodily exertion on the approaching Sunday. We think, too, that cases may occur, which justify severe toil on this day; and we should judge a man unfaithful to himself and his family, ungrateful to Providence, and superstitious, who should lose a crop rather than harvest it during the portion of time ordinarily set apart for Christian worship. On these points, Christianity has left us free. The individual must be his own judge, and we deprecate the attempts of societies to legislate on this indefinite subject for their fellow-Christians.

Another purpose of the associations of which we speak, is, to stop the mail on Sunday. On this point, a great difference of opinion prevails among the most conscientious men. It may be remembered, that, in a former number of this work, there was an article on the Sabbath, discouraging this attempt to interrupt the mail. We think it right to say, that among the contributors to this work, and among its best friends, a diversity of sentiment exists in regard to this difficult question. In one respect, however, we all agree; and that is, in the inexpediency of organizing, in opposition to the Sunday mail, a vast association, which may be easily perverted to political purposes, which, from its very object, will be tempted to meddle with government, and which, by setting up a concerted and joint cry, may overpower and load with reproach the most conscientious men in the community.

Another purpose of these associations, is, to discourage travelling on the Lord's-day. Nothing can well be

plainer, than that unnecessary travelling on this day is repugnant to its duties and design, and is to be reproved in writing, preaching, and conversation. By unnecessary travelling, we mean that which is not required by some particular exigency. When we consider, however, that in such a community as ours, distinguished by extent and variety of intercourse, exigencies must continually occur, we feel, that here is another point with which societies have no right to interfere, and which must be left to the conscience of the individual. In such a community as ours, how many persons may be found on every Sunday, the state of whose health, the state of whose families, the state of whose affairs, may require them to travel? It may happen, that another's property confided to our care may be lost, that a good object may fail, that some dying or departing friend may go from us unseen, if on this day we will not begin or pursue a journey. How often is it difficult for the traveller to find an inn, the quiet and comforts of which make it a fit residence for Sunday? An association against travelling on Sunday, seems to us a very hazardous expedient; and its members, we think, will be fortunate if they escape the guilt of censoriousness and dictation, on a subject which Providence has plainly exempted from human legislation. We know that it will be said, that the licence which we give by these remarks, will be abused; and of this we have no doubt. We know no truth, no privilege, no power, no blessing, no right, which is not abused. But is liberty to be denied to men, because they often turn it into licentiousness? We have read of certain sects, which have denounced indiscriminately all sports and relaxations, because these, if allowed, will be carried to excess; and of others, which have prescribed by laws the plainest, coarsest dress, because ornament, if in any measure tolerated, would certainly grow up into extravagance and vanity. And is this degrading legislation never to end? Are men never to be trusted to themselves? Is it God's method to hem them in with precise prescriptions? Does Providence leave nothing to individual discretion? Does Providence withhold every privilege

which may be abused? Does Christianity enjoin an exact, unvarying round of services, because reason and conscience, if allowed to judge of duty, will often be misguided by partiality and passion? How liberal, generous, confiding, are nature, Providence, and Christianity, in their dealings with men! And when will men learn to exercise towards one another, the same liberal and confiding spirit?

We have thus considered some of the particular purposes of the association for promoting the observance of the Sabbath. We say, their "particular purposes." We apprehend there is a general one, which lurks in a portion of their members, which few perhaps have stated very distinctly to themselves, but which is not therefore the less real, and of which it is well to be forewarned. We apprehend that some, and not a small party, have a vague instinctive feeling, that the kind of Christianity which they embrace, requires for its diffusion a gloomy Sabbath, the Puritan Sabbath; and we incline to believe that they are desirous to separate the Lord's-day as much as possible from all other days, to make it a season of rigid restraint, that it may be a preparation for a system of theology, which the mind, in a natural, free, and cheerful state, can never receive. The Sabbath of the Puritans and their Calvinistic peculiarities go together. Now we wish the return of neither. The Puritans, measured by their age, have indeed many claims on respect, especially those of them who came to this country, and who, through their fortunate exile, escaped the corruption which the civil war and the possession of power engendered in the Puritan body of England. But sincere respect for the men of early times, may be joined with a clear perception of their weaknesses and errors; and it becomes us to remember, that errors, which in them were innocent, because inevitable, may deserve a harsher appellation if perpetuated in their posterity.

We have no desire, it will be seen, to create huge associations for enforcing or recommending the Lord's-day. We desire, however, that this interesting subject may engage more attention. We wish the Lord's-day to be more honoured and more observed; and we believe

that there is but one way for securing this good, and that is to make the day more useful, to turn it to better account, to introduce such changes into it as shall satisfy judicious men, that it is adapted to great and happy results. The Sunday which has come down to us from our fathers, seems to us exceedingly defective. The clergy have naturally taken it very much into their own hands, and, we apprehend, that as yet they have not discovered all the means of making it a blessing to mankind. It may well excite surprise, how little knowledge has been communicated on the Lord's-day. We think, that the present age admits and requires a more extensive teaching than formerly; a teaching not only in sermons, but in more instructive exercises, which will promote a critical and growing acquaintance with the Scriptures; will unfold morality or duty, at once in its principles and vast details; will guide the common mind to larger views, and to a more religious use of nature and history; and will reveal to it its own godlike powers. We think, too, that this great intellectual activity may be relieved and cheered by a mixture of greater benevolent activity; by attention to public and private charities, and by domestic and social kindnesses.* It seems to us that we are waking up to understand the various uses to which Sunday may be applied. The present devotion of a considerable portion of it to the teaching of children, makes an important era in the history of the institution. The teaching of the ignorant and poor, we trust, is to follow. On this subject we cannot enlarge, but enough has been said to show in what way Sunday is to be recommended to the understandings and consciences of men.

In these remarks we have expressed our reverence for the Lord's-day. To us it is a more important day, and consecrated to nobler purposes than the ancient Sabbath. We are bound, however, to state, that we cannot acquiesce in the distinctions which are often

* Would not the business of our public charities be done more effectually on the Lord's-day than on any other, and would not such an appropriation of a part of this time accord peculiarly with the spirit of Christianity?

made between this and other days, for they seem to us at once ungrounded and pernicious. We sometimes hear, for example, that the Lord's-day is set apart from our common lives to religion. What! Are not all days equally set apart to religion? Has religion more to do with Sunday than with any other portion of time? Is there any season, over which piety should not preside? So the day is sometimes distinguished as "holy." What! Is there stronger obligation to holiness on one day than on another? Is it more holy to pray in the church than to pray in the closet, or than to withstand temptation in common life? The true distinction of Sunday is, that it is consecrated to certain means or direct acts of religion. But these are not holier than other duties. They are certainly not more important than their end, which is a virtuous life. There is, we fear, a superstition on this point, unworthy of the illumination of Christianity. We earnestly recommend the Lord's-day, but we dare not esteem its duties above those of other days. We prize and recommend it as an institution through which our whole lives are to be sanctified and ennobled; and without this fruit, vain, and worse than vain, are the most rigid observances, the most costly sacrifices, the loudest and most earnest prayers. We would on no account disparage the offices of the Lord's-day. We delight in this peaceful season, so fitted to allay the feverish heat and anxieties of active life, to cherish self-communion, and communion with God and with the world to come. It is good to meet as brethren, in the church to pray together, to hear the word of God, to retire for a time from ordinary labours, that we may meditate on great truths more deliberately, and with more continuous attention. In these duties we see a fitness, excellence, and happiness; but still, if a comparison must be made, they seem to us less striking proofs of piety and virtue, than are found in the disinterestedness, the self-control, the love of truth, the scorn of ill-gotten wealth, the unshaken trust in God, the temperate and grateful enjoyment, the calm and courageous sufferings for duty, to which the Christian is called in daily life. It is right to adore God's goodness in the

hour of prayer; but does it not seem more excellent to carry in our souls the conviction of this goodness, as our spring and pattern, and to breathe it forth in acts conformed to the beneficence of our Maker? It is good to seek strength from God in the church; but does it not seem more excellent, to use well this strength in the sore conflicts of life, and to rise through it to a magnanimous and victorious virtue? Such comparisons, however, we have no pleasure in making, and they are obviously exposed to error. The enlightened Christian "esteemeth every day alike." To him, all days bring noble duties; bring occasions of a celestial piety and virtue; bring trials, in wrestling with which he may grow strong; bring aids and incitements, through which he may rise above himself. All days may be holy, and the holiest is that in which he yields himself, with the most single-hearted, unshrinking, uncompromising purpose to the will of God.

We intended to add remarks on some other associations, particularly on the Peace society. But we have exceeded our limits, and must forbear. Our remarks have been free, but, we trust, will not be misunderstood. We look with interest and hope on the spirit of association, which characterises our times. We rejoice in this, as in every manifestation of a desire for the improvement of mankind. We have done what we could to secure this powerful instrument against perversion. Through a wise and jealous care, we doubt not that it will minister to that only sure good, the intellectual and moral progress of the human race.

MISCELLANIES.

DAILY PRAYER.

THE Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments agree in enjoining prayer. Let no man call himself a Christian, who lives without giving a part of life to this duty. We are not taught how often we must pray; but our Lord in teaching us to say, "Give us this day our daily bread," implies that we should pray daily. He has even said to us, "pray always;" an injunction to be explained indeed with that latitude which many of his precepts require, but which is not to be satisfied, we think, without regular and habitual devotion. As to the particular hours to be given to this duty, every Christian may choose them for himself. Our religion is too liberal and spiritual to bind us to any place or any hour of prayer. But there are parts of the day particularly favourable to this duty, and which, if possible, should be redeemed for it. On these we shall offer a few reflections.

The first of these periods is the morning, which even nature seems to have pointed out to men of different religions, as a fit time for offerings to the Divinity. In the morning our minds are not so much shaken by worldly cares and pleasures, as in other parts of the day. Retirement and sleep have helped to allay the violence of our feelings, to calm the feverish excitement so often produced by intercourse with men. The hour is a still one. The hurry and tumults of life are not begun, and we naturally share in the tranquillity around us. Having for so many hours lost our hold on the world, we can banish it more easily from the mind, and worship with less divided attention. This, then, is a favourable time for approaching the invisible Author of our being,

for strengthening the intimacy of our minds with him, for thinking upon a future life, and for seeking those spiritual aids which we need in the labours and temptations of every day.

In the morning there is much to feed the spirit of devotion. It offers an abundance of thoughts, friendly to pious feeling. When we look on creation, what a happy and touching change do we witness! A few hours past, the earth was wrapped in gloom and silence. There seemed "a pause in nature." But now, a new flood of light has broken forth, and creation rises before us in fresher and brighter hues, and seems to rejoice as if it had just received birth from its Author. The sun never sheds more cheerful beams, and never proclaims more loudly God's glory and goodness, than when he returns after the coldness and dampness of night, and awakens man and inferior animals to the various purposes of their being. A spirit of joy seems breathed over the earth and through the sky. It requires little effort of imagination to read delight in the kindled clouds, or in the fields bright with dew. This is the time, when we can best feel and bless the Power which said, "Let there be light;" which "set a tabernacle for the sun in the heavens," and made him the dispenser of fruitfulness and enjoyment through all regions.

If we next look at ourselves, what materials does the morning furnish for devout thought! At the close of the past day, we were exhausted by our labours, and unable to move without wearisome effort. Our minds were sluggish, and could not be held to the most interesting objects. From this state of exhaustion, we sunk gradually into entire insensibility. Our limbs became motionless; our senses were shut as in death. Our thoughts were suspended, or only wandered confusedly and without aim. Our friends, and the universe, and God himself were forgotten. And what a change does the morning bring with it! On waking, we find that sleep, the image of death, has silently infused into us a new life. The weary limbs are braced again. The dim eye has become bright and piercing. The mind is returned from the region of forgetfulness to its old pos-

sessions. Friends are met again with a new interest. We are again capable of devout sentiment, virtuous effort, and Christian hope. With what subjects of gratitude then does the morning furnish us! We can hardly recall the state of insensibility from which we have just emerged, without a consciousness of our dependence, or think of the renovation of our powers and intellectual being, without feeling our obligation to God. There is something very touching in the consideration, if we will fix our minds upon it, that God thought of us when we could not think; that he watched over us, when we had no power to avert peril from ourselves; that he continued our vital motions, and in due time broke the chains of sleep, and set our imprisoned faculties free. How fit is it at this hour to raise to God the eyes which he has opened, and the arm which he has strengthened; to acknowledge his providence; and to consecrate to him the powers which he has renewed! How fit that he should be the first object of the thoughts and affections which he has restored! How fit to employ in his praise the tongue which he has loosed, and the breath which he has spared!

But the morning is a fit time for devotion, not only from its relation to the past night, but considered as the introduction of a new day. To a thinking mind, how natural at this hour are such reflections as the following: —I am now to enter on a new period of my life, to start afresh in my course. I am to return to that world, where I have often gone astray; to receive impressions which may never be effaced; to perform actions which will never be forgotten; to strengthen a character, which will fit me for heaven or hell. I am this day to meet temptations which have often subdued me; I am to be entrusted again with opportunities of usefulness, which I have often neglected. I am to influence the minds of others, to help in moulding their characters, and in deciding the happiness of their present and future life. How uncertain is this day! What unseen dangers are before me! What unexpected changes may await me! It may be my last day! It will certainly bring me nearer to death and judgment!

—Now, when entering on a period of life so important yet so uncertain, how fit and natural is it, before we take the first step, to seek the favour of that Being on whom the lot of every day depends, to commit all our interests to his almighty and wise providence, to seek his blessing on our labours and his succour in temptation, and to consecrate to his service the day which he raises upon us. This morning devotion, not only agrees with the sentiments of the heart, but tends to make the day happy, useful, and virtuous. Having cast ourselves on the mercy and protection of the Almighty, we shall go forth with new confidence to the labours and duties which he imposes. Our early prayer will help to shed an odour of piety through the whole life. God, having first occupied, will more easily recur to our mind. Our first step will be in the right path, and we may hope a happy issue.

So fit and useful is morning devotion, it ought not to be omitted without necessity. If our circumstances will allow the privilege, it is a bad sign, when no part of the morning is spent in prayer. If God find no place in our minds at that early and peaceful hour, he will hardly recur to us in the tumults of life. If the benefits of the morning do not soften us, we can hardly expect the heart to melt with gratitude through the day. If the world then rush in and take possession of us, when we are at some distance and have had a respite from its cares, how can we hope to shake it off, when we shall be in the midst of it, pressed and agitated by it on every side. Let a part of the morning, if possible, be set apart to devotion; and to this end we should fix the hour of rising, so that we may have an early hour at our own disposal. Our piety is suspicious, if we can renounce, as too many do, the pleasures and benefits of early prayer, rather than forego the senseless indulgence of unnecessary sleep. What! we can rise early enough for business. We can even anticipate the dawn, if a favourite pleasure or an uncommon gain requires the effort. But we cannot rise, that we may bless our great Benefactor, that we may arm ourselves for the severe conflicts to which our principles are to be exposed.

We are willing to rush into the world, without thanks offered, or a blessing sought. From a day thus begun, what ought we to expect but thoughtlessness and guilt?

Let us now consider another part of the day which is favourable to the duty of prayer; we mean the evening. This season, like the morning, is calm and quiet. Our labours are ended. The bustle of life has gone by. The distracting glare of the day has vanished. The darkness which surrounds us favours seriousness, composure, and solemnity. At night the earth fades from our sight, and nothing of creation is left us but the starry heavens, so vast, so magnificent, so serene, as if to guide up our thoughts above all earthly things to God and immortality.

This period should in part be given to prayer, as it furnishes a variety of devotional topics and excitements. The evening is the close of an important division of time, and is therefore a fit and natural season for stopping and looking back on the day. And can we ever look back on a day, which bears no witness to God, and lays no claim to our gratitude? Who is it that strengthens us for daily labour, gives us daily bread, continues our friends and common pleasures, and grants us the privilege of retiring after the cares of the day to a quiet and beloved home? The review of the day will often suggest not only these ordinary benefits, but peculiar proofs of God's goodness, unlooked for successes, singular concurrences of favourable events, signal blessings sent to our friends, or new and powerful aids to our own virtue, which call for peculiar thankfulness, And shall all these benefits pass away unnoticed? Shall we retire to repose as insensible as the wearied brute? How fit and natural is it, to close with pious acknowledgment, the day which has been filled with Divine beneficence!

But the evening is the time to review, not only our blessings, but our actions. A reflecting mind will naturally remember at this hour that another day is gone, and gone to testify of us to our Judge. How natural and useful to inquire, what report it has carried to heaven? Perhaps we have the satisfaction of looking back on a day, which in its general tenor has been in-

nocent and pure, which, having begun with God's praise, has been spent as in his presence; which has proved the reality of our principles in temptation; and shall such a day end without gratefully acknowledging Him, in whose strength we have been strong, and to whom we owe the powers and opportunities of Christian improvement? But no day will present to us recollections of purity unmixed with sin. Conscience, if suffered to inspect faithfully and speak plainly, will recount irregular desires, and defective motives, talents wasted and time misspent; and shall we let the day pass from us without penitently confessing our offences to Him who has witnessed them, and who has promised pardon to true repentance? Shall we retire to rest with a burden of unlamented and unforgiven guilt upon our consciences? Shall we leave these stains to spread over and sink into the soul? A religious recollection of our lives is one of the chief instruments of piety. If possible, no day should end without it. If we take no account of our sins on the day on which they are committed, can we hope that they will recur to us at a more distant period, that we shall watch against them to-morrow, or that we shall gain the strength to resist them, which we will not implore?

One observation more, and we have done. The evening is a fit time for prayer, not only as it ends the day, but as it immediately precedes the period of repose. The hours of activity having passed, we are soon to sink into insensibility and sleep. How fit that we resign ourselves to the care of that Being who never sleeps, to whom the darkness is as the light, and whose providence is our only safety! How fit to entreat him, that he would keep us to another day; or, if our bed should prove our grave, that he would give us a part in the resurrection of the just, and awake us to a purer and immortal life. The most important periods of prayer have now been pointed out. Let our prayers, like the ancient sacrifices, ascend morning and evening. Let our days begin and end with God.

MEANS OF PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY.

We live at a time, when the obligation of extending Christianity is more felt than in many past ages. There is much stir, motion, and zeal around us in this good cause. Even those who seem not to be burdened by an excess of piety themselves, are in earnest to give it to others. The activity of multitudes is taking strongly this direction; and as men are naturally restless, and want room for action, and will do mischief rather than do nothing, a philanthropist will rejoice that this new channel is opened for carrying off the superabundant energies of multitudes, even if no other good should result from it.

We hope however much other good. We trust, that, whilst many inferior motives and many fanatical impulses are giving birth and action to large associations in Christendom; whilst the love of sway in some, and the love of congregating in others, and the passion for doing something great and at a distance in all, are rearing mighty institutions among us—still many sincere Christians are governed in these concerns by a supreme desire of spreading Christianity. They have found the Gospel an infinite good, and would communicate it to their fellow-beings. They have drunk from the Fountain of Life, and would send forth the stream to gladden every wilderness and solitary place, and to assuage the thirst of every anxious and afflicted mind. They turn with continual pleasure to the prophetic passages of Scripture, and, interpreting them by their wishes, hope a speedy change in the moral state of the world, and are impatient to bear a part in this stupendous renovation. That they are doing good we doubt not, though perhaps not

in the way which they imagine or would prefer. The immediate and general success of their attempts would perhaps be ultimately injurious to Christianity. They are sending out, together with God's Word, corrupt interpretations of some parts of it, which considerably neutralise its saving power, and occasionally make it a positive injury. They are perhaps to do good, not by success, so much as by failure. Almost all great enterprises are accomplished gradually, and by methods which have been learned from many unsuccessful trials, from a slow accumulation of experience. The first labourers often do little more than teach those who come after them what to avoid, and how to labour more effectually than themselves. But be the issue what it may, sincere Christians, who embark in this good work, not from party spirit and self-conceit, as if they and their sect were depositaries of all truth and virtue, but from unaffected philanthropy and attachment to Jesus Christ, will have their reward. Even a degree of extravagance in such a cause may be forgiven. Men are willing that the imagination should be kindled on other subjects; that the judgment should sometimes slumber, and leave the affections to feed on hopes brighter than reality; that patriotism, and philanthropy, and the domestic affections should sometimes break out in chivalrous enterprises, and should seek their ends by means on which the reason may look coldly. Why then shall we frown on every deviation from the strictest judiciousness in a concern, which appeals so strongly to the heart as the extension of Christianity? Men may be too rational as well as too fervent; and the man, whose pious wish of the speedy conversion of the world rises into a strong anticipation of the event, and who, taking his measure of duty from the primitive disciples, covets sacrifices in so good a cause, is an incomparably nobler spirit than he, who, believing that the moral condition of the world is as invariable as the laws of material nature, and seeking pretexts for sloth in a heart-chilling philosophy, has no concern for the multitudes who are sitting in darkness, and does nothing to spread the religion which he believes to have come from Heaven.

There is one danger, however, at a period like the present, when we are aiming to send Christianity to a distance, which demands attention. It is the danger of neglecting the best methods of propagating Christianity—of overlooking much plainer obligations than that of converting Heathens—of forgetting the claims of our religion at home and by our firesides. It happens, that on this, as on almost every subject, our most important duties are quiet, retired, noiseless, attracting little notice, and administering little powerful excitement to the imagination. The surest efforts for extending Christianity are those which few observe, which are recorded in no magazine, blazoned at no anniversaries, immortalised by no eloquence. Such efforts, being enjoined only by conscience and God, and requiring steady, patient, unwearied toil, we are apt to overlook, and perhaps never more so than when the times furnish a popular substitute for them, and when we can discharge our consciences by labours, which demanding little self-denial are yet talked of as the highest exploits of Christian charity. Hence it is, that when most is said of labours to propagate Christianity, the least may be really and effectually done. We hear a torrent roaring, and imagine that the fields are plentifully watered, when the torrent owes its violence to a ruinous concentration of streams, which before moved quietly in a thousand little channels, moistening the hidden roots, and publishing their course, not to the ear but to the eye, by the refreshing verdure which grew up around them. It is proper, then, when new methods are struck out for sending Christianity abroad, to remind men often of the old-fashioned methods of promoting it, to insist on the superiority of the means, which are in almost every man's reach, which require no extensive associations, and which do not subject us to the temptations of exaggerated praise. We do not mean that any exertion, which promises to extend our religion in any tolerable state of purity, is to be declined. But the first rank is to be given to the efforts which God has made the plain duties of men in all ranks and conditions of life. Two of these methods will be briefly mentioned.

First, every individual should feel, that whilst his influence over other men's hearts and character is very bounded, his power over his own heart is great and constant, and that his zeal for extending Christianity is to appear chiefly in extending it through his own mind and life. Let him remember that he as truly enlarges God's kingdom by invigorating his own moral and religious principles, as by communicating them to others. Our first concern is at home, our chief work is in our own breasts. It is idle to talk of our anxiety for other men's souls, if we neglect our own. Without personal virtue and religion, we cannot, even if we would, do much for the cause of Christ. It is only by purifying our own conceptions of God and duty, that we can give clear and useful views to others. We must first feel the power of religion, or we cannot recommend it with an unaffected and prevalent zeal. Would we then promote pure Christianity? Let us see that it be planted and take root in our own minds, and that no busy concern for others take us from the labour of self-inspection, and the retired and silent offices of piety.

The second method is intimately connected with the first. It is example. This is a means within the reach of all. Be our station in life what it may, it has duties, in performing which faithfully, we give important aid to the cause of morality and piety. The efficacy of this means of advancing Christianity cannot be easily calculated. Example has an insinuating power, transforming the observer without noise, attracting him without the appearance of effort. A truly Christian life is better than large contributions of wealth for the propagation of Christianity. The most prominent instruction of Jesus on this point, is, that we must let men "see our good works," if we would lead them to "glorify our Father in heaven." Let men see in us, that religion is something real, something more than high sounding and empty words, a restraint from sin, a bulwark against temptation, a spring of upright and useful action; let them see it, not an idle form, nor a transient feeling, but our companion through life, infusing its purity into our common pursuits, following us to our homes, setting

a guard round our integrity in the resorts of business, sweetening our tempers in seasons of provocation, disposing us habitually to sympathy with others, to patience and cheerfulness under our own afflictions, to candid judgment, and to sacrifices for others' good; and we may hope that our light will not shine uselessly, that some slumbering conscience will be roused by this testimony to the excellence and practicableness of religion, that some worldly professor of Christianity will learn his obligations and blush for his criminal inconsistency, and that some, in whom the common arguments for our religion may have failed to work a full belief, will be brought to the knowledge of the truth, by this plain practical proof of the heavenly nature of Christianity. Every man is surrounded with beings, who are moulded more or less by the principles of sympathy and imitation; and this social part of our nature he is bound to press into the service of Christianity.

It will not be supposed from these remarks on the duty of aiding Christianity by our example, that religion is to be worn ostentatiously, and that the Christian is studiously to exhibit himself and his good works for imitation. That same book which enjoins us to be patterns, tells us to avoid parade, and even to prefer entire secrecy in our charities and our prayers. Nothing destroys the weight of example so much as labour to make it striking and observed. Goodness, to be interesting, must be humble, modest, unassuming, not fond of show, not waiting for great and conspicuous occasions, but disclosing itself without labour and without design, in pious and benevolent offices so simple, so minute, so steady, so habitual, that they will carry a conviction of the singleness and purity of the heart from which they proceed. Such goodness is never lost. It glorifies itself by the very humility which encircles it, just as the lights of heaven often break with peculiar splendour through the cloud which threatened to obscure them.

A pure example, which is found to be more consistent in proportion as it is more known, is the best method of preaching and extending Christianity. Without it, zeal for converting men brings reproach on the cause.

A bad man, or a man of only ordinary goodness, who puts himself forward in this work, throws a suspiciousness over the efforts of better men, and thus the world come to set down all labour for spreading Christianity as mere pretence. Let not him who will not submit to the toil of making himself better, become a reformer at home or abroad. Let not him who is known to be mean, or dishonest, or intriguing, or censorious, or unkind in his neighbourhood, talk of his concern for other men's souls. His life is an injury to religion, which his contributions of zeal, or even of wealth, cannot repair, and its injuriousness is aggravated by these very attempts to expiate its guilt, to reconcile him to himself.

It is well known, that the greatest obstruction to Christianity in heathen countries, is the palpable and undeniable depravity of Christian nations. They abhor our religion, because we are such unhappy specimens of it. They are unable to read our books, but they can read our lives; and what wonder, if they reject with scorn a system under which the vices seem to have flourished so luxuriantly. The Indian of both hemispheres has reason to set down the Christian as little better than himself. He associates with the name, perfidy, fraud, rapacity, and slaughter. Can we wonder that he is unwilling to receive a religion from the hand which has chained or robbed him? Thus bad example is the great obstruction to Christianity, abroad as well as at home; and perhaps little good is to be done abroad, until we become better at home, until real Christians understand and practise their religion more thoroughly, and by their example and influence spread it among their neighbours and through their country, so that the aspect of Christian nations shall be less shocking and repulsive to the Jew, Mahometan, and Pagan. Our first labour should be upon ourselves; and indeed if our religion be incapable of bearing more fruit among ourselves, it hardly seems to deserve a very burning zeal for its propagation. The question is an important one; would much be gained to heathen countries, were we to make them precisely what nations called Christian now are? That the change would be beneficial, we grant;

but how many dark stains would remain on their characters! They would continue to fight and shed blood as they now do, to resent injuries hotly, to worship present gain and distinction, and to pursue the common business of life on the principles of undisguised selfishness; and they would learn one lesson of iniquity which they have not yet acquired, and that is, to condemn and revile their brethren, who should happen to view the most perplexed points of theology differently from themselves. The truth is, Christian nations want a genuine reformation, one worthy of the name. They need to have their zeal directed, not so much to the spreading of the Gospel abroad, as to the application of its plain precepts to their daily business, to the education of their children, to the treatment of their domestics and dependants, and to their social and religious intercourse. They need to understand, that a man's piety is to be estimated, not so much by his professions or direct religious exercises, as by a conscientious surrender of his will, passions, worldly interests, and prejudices, to the acknowledged duties of Christianity, and especially by a philanthropy resembling in its great features of mildness, activity, and endurance, that of Jesus Christ. They need to give up their severe inquisition into their neighbours' opinions, and to begin in earnest to seek for themselves, and to communicate to others a nobler standard of temper and practice, than they have yet derived from the Scriptures. In a word, they need to learn the real value and design of Christianity by the only thorough and effectual process; that is, by drinking deeply into its spirit of love to God and man. If, in this age of societies, we should think it wise to recommend another institution for the propagation of Christianity, it would be one, the members of which should be pledged to assist and animate one another in living according to the sermon on the Mount. How far such a measure would be effectual, we venture not to predict; but of one thing we are sure, that should it prosper, it would do more for spreading the Gospel, than all other associations which are now receiving the patronage of the Christian world.

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION TO SOCIETY.

Few men suspect, perhaps no man comprehends, the extent of the support given by religion to the virtues of ordinary life. No man perhaps is aware, how much our moral and social sentiments are fed from this fountain—how powerless conscience would become without the belief of a God—how palsied would be human benevolence, were there not the sense of a higher benevolence to quicken and sustain it—how suddenly the whole social fabric would quake, and with what a fearful crash it would sink into hopeless ruins, were the ideas of a Supreme Being, of accountableness, and of a future life, to be utterly erased from every mind. Once let men thoroughly believe that they are the work and sport of chance; that no superior intelligence concerns itself with human affairs; that all their improvements perish for ever at death; that the weak have no guardian, and the injured no avenger; that there is no recompense for sacrifices to uprightness and the public good; that an oath is unheard in heaven; that secret crimes have no witness but the perpetrator; that human existence has no purpose, and human virtue no unfailing friend; that this brief life is everything to us, and death is total, everlasting extinction; once let men thoroughly abandon religion, and who can conceive or describe the extent of the desolation which would follow? We hope perhaps that human laws and natural sympathy would hold society together. As reasonably might we believe, that were the sun quenched in the heavens, our torches could illuminate, and our fires quicken and fertilise the earth. What is there in human nature to awaken respect and tenderness, if man is the unprotected insect of a

day? and what is he more if Atheism be true? Erase all thought and fear of God from a community, and selfishness and sensuality would absorb the whole man. Appetite, knowing no restraint, and poverty and suffering, having no solace or hope, would trample in scorn on the restraints of human laws. Virtue, duty, principle, would be mocked and spurned as unmeaning sounds. A sordid self-interest, would supplant every other feeling, and man would become in fact, what the theory of Atheism declares him to be, a companion for brutes.

It particularly deserves attention in this discussion, that the Christian religion is singularly important to free communities. In truth, we may doubt whether civil freedom can subsist without it. This at least we know, that equal rights and an impartial administration of justice, have never been enjoyed where this religion has not been understood. It favours free institutions, first, because its spirit is the very spirit of liberty; that is, a spirit of respect for the interests and rights of others. Christianity recognises the essential equality of mankind; beats down with its whole might those aspiring and rapacious principles of our nature, which have subjected the many to the few; and, by its refining influence, as well as by direct precept, turns to God, and to Him only, that supreme homage which has been so impiously lavished on crowned and titled fellow-creatures. Thus its whole tendency is free. It lays deeply the only foundations of liberty, which are the principles of benevolence, justice, and respect for human nature. The spirit of liberty is not merely, as multitudes imagine, a jealousy of our own particular rights, an unwillingness to be oppressed ourselves, but a respect for the rights of others, and an unwillingness that any man, whether high or low, should be wronged, and trampled under foot. Now this is the spirit of Christianity; and liberty has no security, any farther than this uprightness and benevolence of sentiment actuates a community.

In another method, religion befriends liberty. It diminishes the necessity of public restraints, and supersedes in a great degree the use of force in administering the laws; and this it does, by making men a law to them-

selves, and by repressing the disposition to disturb and injure society. Take away the purifying and restraining influence of religion, and selfishness, rapacity, and injustice will break out in new excesses; and amidst the increasing perils of society, government must be strengthened to defend it, must accumulate means of repressing disorder and crime; and this strength and these means may be, and often have been, turned against the freedom of the state which they were meant to secure. Diminish principle, and you increase the need of force in a community. In this country, government needs not the array of power which you meet in other nations—no guards of soldiers, no hosts of spies, no vexatious regulations of police—but accomplishes its beneficent purposes by a few unarmed judges and civil officers, and operates so silently around us, and comes so seldom in contact with us, that many of us enjoy its blessings with hardly a thought of its existence. This is the perfection of freedom; and to what do we owe this condition? I answer, to the power of those laws which religion writes on our hearts, which unite and concentrate public opinion against injustice and oppression, which spread a spirit of equity and good will through the community. Thus religion is the soul of freedom, and no nation under heaven has such an interest in it as ourselves.

MEMOIR OF JOHN GALLISON, ESQ.*

Our last number contained a brief notice of Mr. Gallison; but his rare excellence, and the singular affection, esteem, and confidence which he enjoyed, have been thought to demand a more particular delineation of his character. And the office is too grateful to be declined. In the present imperfect condition of human nature, when strange and mournful inconsistencies so often mix with and shade the virtues of good men; when Truth, that stern monitor, almost continually forbids us to give free scope to admiration, and compels us to dispense our praise with a measured and timid liberality; it is delightful to meet an example of high endowments, undebased by the mixture of unworthy habits and feelings; to meet a character whose blamelessness spares us the pain of making deductions from its virtues. And our satisfaction is greatly increased, when Providence has seen fit to unfold this character in the open light of a conspicuous station, so that many around us have had opportunity to observe it as well as ourselves, and we can give utterance to our affection and respect, with the confidence of finding sympathy and a full response in the hearts of our readers.

But we have a higher motive, than the relief and gratification of personal feelings, for paying this tribute to Mr. Gallison. We consider his character as singularly instructive, particularly to that important class of the community, young men. His life, whilst it bore strong testimony to those great principles of morality and religion, in which all ranks and ages have an interest, and on which society rests, seems to us peculiarly valuable,

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as a commentary on the capacities and right application of youth; as demonstrating what a young man may become, what honour, love, and influence he may gather round him, and how attractive are the Christian virtues at that age which is generally considered as least amenable to the laws of religion. For young men we chiefly make this record; and we do it with a deep conviction, that society cannot be served more effectually than by spreading through this class a purer morality, and a deeper sense of responsibility than are now enforced by public opinion; for our young men are soon to be the fathers, guides, and defenders of the community; and however examples may now and then occur of early profligacy changed by time into purity and virtue, yet too often the harvest answers to the seed, the building to the foundation; and perhaps it will appear on that great day which is to unfold the consequences of actions, that even forsaken vice leaves wounds in the mind, which are slowly healed, and which injure the moral powers, and predispose to moral disease, through the whole life.

In this connexion it may be proper to observe, that there is no country, in which society has such an interest in bringing strong moral and religious influences to bear on young men, as in this; for our country has been distinguished by the premature growth of those to whom it gives birth. Various circumstances here develope the mind and active powers earlier than in Europe. Our young men come forward sooner into life; mix sooner in the stir and conflicts of business and politics; and form sooner the most important domestic relations. It has often been suggested, that the mind suffers under this forcing system, that it is exhausted by excess of action, that a slower growth would give it greater strength and expansion. But be this true or not (and we trust that the suggestion is founded on remote analogies rather than on observation), one thing is plain, that in proportion as the young advance rapidly in intellect and activity, there should be a powerful application of moral and religious truths and sanctions to their consciences and hearts. Their whole nature should grow at once. The moral sense, the sense of God, should not slumber,

whilst the intellect and the passions are awake and enlarging themselves with a fearful energy. A conviction of their responsibility to God and society should be deeply wrought into the opening reason, so as to recur through life with the force of instinct. Mr. Gallison was a striking example of the early and harmonious unfolding of the moral and intellectual nature, and in this view his character is particularly fitted to the wants and dangers of our state of society.

When we know or hear of uncommon excellence, it is natural to inquire, by what propitious circumstances it was formed; and hence the curiosity which has sifted so diligently the early history of eminent men. But such investigations, we believe, generally teach us, that character is more independent on outward circumstances than is usually thought, that the chief causes which form a superior mind are within itself. Whilst the Supreme Being encourages liberally the labours of education by connecting with them many good and almost sure results, still, as if to magnify his own power and to teach men humility and dependence, he often produces with few or no means, a strength of intellect and principle, a grace and dignity of character, which the most anxious human culture cannot confer. In the early years of Mr. Gallison, we find no striking circumstances or incidents which determined the peculiarities of his future character. The processes, by which he became what he was, were inward; and the only voice, which could disclose them, is now silent in death.

He was born in Marblehead, October, 1788. His mother, a sister of the late Chief Justice Sewall, survived his birth but a few hours; and his life began with one of the heaviest of life's afflictions, the loss of a mother's love. He was so happy, however, as to be the object of singular and never-failing kindness to his surviving parent, whom he requited with no common filial attachment; and he may be cited as a proof of the good effects of that more unrestrained and tender intercourse between parents and children, which distinguishes the present from the past age. He was early placed under the tuition of the Rev. Dr. Harris, now President of Co-

lumbia College, New-York, then preceptor of an academy, and rector of an Episcopal church, in Marblehead. He is said to have endeared himself to his revered instructor by his docility, industry, modesty, love of truth, and steady improvement. He held a high but unenvied rank at school; and it may be mentioned as an evidence of early judgment and a constant mind, that some of the friendships of that early period went with him to the grave, and were among the best enjoyments of his life.

He entered the university at Cambridge, A. D. 1803, in the fifteenth year of his age; and whilst his unremitting application gave him the full benefit of its various provisions for literary improvement, his consistent character and social virtues won for him universal confidence and esteem. On leaving the university, he commenced the study of the law under the Hon. John Quincy Adams, and having completed his preparation under the Hon. Joseph Story, began the practice of his profession at Marblehead, A. D. 1810. By the advice of his friends he soon removed to this metropolis, a more proper, because wider sphere of action. Here he experienced, for a time, those anxieties and depressions, which form the common trial of young men, who enter a crowded profession. But his prospects were brightened by a connexion in business, which he formed with the Hon. William Prescott, and which, as it was unsolicited and attended by other flattering circumstances, gave him a gratifying assurance of the confidence which he had inspired. The progress of his reputation as a lawyer was soon a matter of common remark; and those who were most capable of understanding the depth and extent of his legal attainments, were confident, that should his life be spared, he would attain the highest honours of his profession.

He died December, 1820, at the age of 32. The shock given to the community by this event was unusual, and the calamity was heightened by its unexpectedness. His general health, cheerfulness, and activity, had given the promise of a long life; and his friends were not alarmed for him until a week before his death. His disease was an inflammation of the brain, which first

discovered itself in slight aberrations of mind, and terminated in delirium. This awful eclipse of reason continued to the last, so that his friends were denied the satisfaction of receiving from his dying lips assurances of his Christian hope. Some of them however recollect with pleasure, that at the beginning of his disease, when his intellect was rather exalted than deranged, his expressions of religious feeling and joy were unusually strong; and he has left them higher consolation than a dying testimony, even the memory of a blameless and well-spent life.

Having given this brief record of a life too peaceful and prosperous to furnish matter for biography, we proceed to give our views of the character of Mr. Gallison. —His chief distinction was not talent, although he had fine powers of intellect, and a capacity of attention, which, in usefulness if not in splendour, generally surpasses genius. His primary characteristic, and that which gave him his peculiar weight in the community, was the force of moral and religious principle; a force, which operated with the steadiness of a law of nature, a paramount energy which suffered no portion of life or intellect to be wasted, which concentrated all his faculties and feelings on worthy objects. His powers did not astonish, but none of them were lost to himself or society. His great distinction was the singleness of his mind, the sway which duty had gained over him, his habit of submitting to this as to an inviolable ordinance of the universe. Conscience was consulted reverently as an oracle of God. The moral power seemed always at work in his breast, and its control reached to his whole life.

We sometimes witness a strong regard to duty, which confers little grace or interest on the character, because partial and exclusive views are taken of duty, and God is thought to require a narrow service, which chains and contracts instead of unfolding the mind. In Mr. Gallison, the sense of duty was as enlightened and enlarged, as it was strong. To live religiously, he did not think himself called to give up the proper pursuits and gratifications of human nature. He believed, that religion

was in harmony with intellectual improvement, with the pleasures of imagination and society, and especially with the kind affections. His views of the true excellence of a human being were large and generous; and hence, instead of that contracted and repulsive character, which has often been identified with piety, his virtue, though of adamantine firmness, was attractive, cheerful, lovely.

This union of strength and light, in his sense of duty, gave a singular harmony to his character. All his faculties and sensibilities seemed to unfold together, just as the whole body grows at once; and all were preserved, by a wise presiding moral sentiment, in their just proportions. He was remarkably free from excess, even in the virtues and pursuits to which he was most prone. His well-balanced mind was the admiration of his friends. He had strong feeling, yet a calm judgment; and unwearied activity, without restlessness or precipitancy. He had vigour and freedom of thought, but not the slightest propensity to rash and wild speculation. He had professional ardour, but did not sacrifice to his profession the general improvement of his intellect and heart. He loved study, and equally loved society. He had religious sensibility, but a sensibility which never rested, until it had found its true perfection and manifestation in practice. His mind was singularly harmonious, a well-adjusted whole; and this was the secret of the signal confidence which he inspired; for confidence, or the repose of our minds on another, depends on nothing so much as on the proportion which we observe in his character. Even a good feeling, when carried to excess, though viewed with indulgence and affection, always shakes in a measure our trust.

From this general survey, we pass to some particulars of the character of Mr. Gallison. His religion was a trait which claims our first consideration. He believed in God, and in the revelation of his will by Jesus Christ; and he was not a man in whom such a belief could lie dead. That great and almost overwhelming doctrine, of a God, the Maker of all things, in whom he lived, and from whom all his blessings came, wrought in him power-

fully. He was not satisfied with a superficial religion, but was particularly interested in those instructions from the pulpit which enjoined a deep, living, all-pervading sense of God's presence and authority, and an intimate union of the mind with its Creator. A friend, who knew him intimately, observes,—"In our frequent walks, his conversation so naturally and cheerfully turned on the attributes and dispensations of God, as convinced me that his religion was no less the delight of his heart than the guide of his life. Though habitually temperate in his feelings, I have sometimes known him kindle into rapture while conversing on these holy themes."

But his religion, though strong and earnest, was in unison with his whole character, calm, inquisitive, rational. Uninfected by bigotry or fanaticism, and unseduced by the fair promises of the spirit of innovation, he formed his views of the Christian system with caution, and held them without asperity. In regard to that important doctrine which has lately agitated the community, he was a Unitarian, believing in the pre-existence of the Saviour, and as firmly believing that he was a distinct being from the Supreme God, derived from and dependent on him; and he considered the Gospel of John, which is often esteemed as the stronghold of opposite sentiments, as giving peculiar support to these views. We mention this, not because the conclusions of so wise and good a man were necessarily true, but because reproach is often thrown on the opinions which he adopted, as wanting power to purify and save. He may have erred, for he was a man; but who that knew him can doubt, that whatever were his errors, he held the most important and efficacious doctrines of Christianity? His religious friends, and they were not a few, can testify to the seriousness and reverence with which he approached the Scriptures, and to the fidelity with which he availed himself of the means of a right interpretation.

His religion was not ostentatiously thrust on notice; but he thought as little of hiding it, as of concealing his social feelings, or his love of knowledge. It was the light by which he walked, and his daily path showed whence the light came. Of his decision in asserting the prin-

ciples of that religion, which he received as from God, he gave a striking proof in his address to the Peace Society of this Commonwealth, which breathes the very morality of Christ, and is throughout a mild but firm remonstrance against great practical errors, which have corrupted the church almost as deeply as the world. It was so natural to him to act on the convictions of his mind, that he seemed on this occasion utterly unconscious, that there was a degree of heroism in a young man of a secular calling, and who mixed occasionally in fashionable life, enlisting so earnestly in the service of the most neglected, yet most distinguishing virtues of Christianity.

That a man, to whom Christianity was so authoritative, should be characterised by its chief grace, benevolence, we cannot wonder. Nature formed him for the kind affections, and religious principle added tenderness, steadiness, dignity, to the impulses of nature. That great maxim of Christianity, "No man liveth to himself," was engraven on his mind. Without profession, or show, or any striking discoveries of emotion, he felt the claim of every thing human on his sympathy and service. His youth and professional engagements did not absolve him to his own conscience from labouring in the cause of mankind; and his steady zeal redeemed from business sufficient time for doing extensive good. In the institutions for useful objects, with which he connected himself, he gave more than his property; he contributed his mind, his judgment, his well-directed zeal; and the object which he was found to favour, derived advantage from his sanction, no less than from his labours.

He felt strongly, what a just view of human nature always teaches, that society is served by nothing so essentially, as by the infusion of a moral and religious spirit into all its classes; and this principle, like every other when once recognised, became to him a law. We cannot but mention with great pleasure, the earnestness with which he entered into a plan for collecting the poor children, in the neighbourhood of the church where he worshipped, into a school for religious instruction on the Lord's-day. He visited many poor families on this errand of charity, offering at once Christian instruction,

and the pecuniary means by which the children might be clothed decently to receive it; and he gave a part of every Sunday to this office. The friend, whom we formerly quoted, observes, " I was much delighted to see him one Sunday, leading one of his little flock (who being a stranger had not become familiarised to his home) through our dirtiest lanes, and inquiring at the humblest sheds for his dwelling." To a man crowded with business, and accustomed to the most refined society, this lowly and unostentatious mode of charity could only have been recommended by a supreme sense of religious and social obligation. He was one of the few among us, who saw that the initiation of the poor into moral and religious truth, was an office worthy of the most cultivated understanding, and that to leave it, as it is sometimes left, to those whose zeal outstrips their knowledge, was to expose to hazard and reproach one of the most powerful means of benefiting society.

Another cause to which he devoted himself, was the Peace Society of this Commonwealth, and to this institution his mind was drawn and bound by perceiving its accordance with the spirit of Christianity. Accustomed as he was to believe that every principle which a man adopts is to be carried into life, he was shocked with the repugnance between the Christian code and the practice of its professed followers on the subject of war; and he believed that Christianity, seconded as it is by the progress of society, was a power adequate to the production of a great revolution of opinion on this point, if its plain principles and the plain interests of men were earnestly unfolded. There was one part of this extensive topic, to which his mind particularly turned. He believed that society had made sufficient advances, to warrant the attempt to expunge from the usages of war the right of capturing private property at sea. He believed that the evils of war would be greatly abridged, and its recurrence checked, were the ocean to be made a safe, privileged, unmolested pathway for all nations, whether in war or peace; and that the minds of men had become prepared for this change, by the respect now paid by belligerents to private property on shore—a miti-

gation of war to be wholly ascribed to the progress of the principles and spirit of Christianity. His interest in this subject led him to study the history of maritime warfare, and probably no man among us had acquired a more extensive acquaintance with it. Some of the results he gave in an article in the North American Review, on Privateering, and in a Memorial to Congress against this remnant of barbarism. To this field of labour he certainly was not drawn by the hope of popularity; and though he outstripped the feelings of the community, his efforts will not be vain. He was a pioneer in a path, in which society, if it continue to advance, will certainly follow him, and will at length do justice to the wisdom as well as purity of his design.

Other institutions shared his zeal and countenance; but we pass from these to observe, that his benevolence was not husbanded for public works or great occasions. It entered into the very frame and structure of his mind, so that, wherever he acted, he left its evidences and fruits. Even in those employments, where a man is expected to propose distinctly his own interest, he looked beyond himself; and those who paid him for his services, felt that another debt was due, and personal attachment often sprung from the intercourse of business. In his social and domestic connexions, how he felt and lived, and what spirit he breathed, we learn from the countenances and tones of his friends, when they speak of his loss. The kind of praise which a man receives after death, corresponds generally with precision to his character. We can often see on the decease of a distinguished individual, that whilst all praise, few feel; that the heart has no burden, no oppression. In the case of Mr. Gallison, there was a general, spontaneous conviction that society had been bereaved; and at the same time, a feeling of personal bereavement, as if a void which no other could fill, were made in every circle in which he familiarly moved; and this can only be explained by the genuine benevolence, the sympathy with every human interest, which formed his character. His benevolence indeed was singularly unalloyed. Those feelings of unkindness which sometimes obscure, for a

moment, the goodness of excellent men, seldom or never passed over him. Those who best knew him, cannot, by an effort of imagination, put an acrimonious speech into his lips, any more than they can think of him under an entirely different countenance. The voice ceases to be his, its tones do not belong to him, when they would make it the vehicle of unkindness. We have understood, what we should not doubt, that in his profession, amidst the collision of rivals, his ambition, which undoubtedly degenerated sometimes into excess, was still so controlled by his generosity and uprightness, that he was never known to sully with an envious breath, the honest fame of another, or to withhold a ready testimony to another's worth. So great was the kindliness of his heart, that his many pressing employments did not exclude those little attentions to his kindred, for which multiplied cares are generally admitted as an excuse. He made leisure for minute as well as important services, and thus it is that a feeling of tenderness as well as of respect, is spread through the whole circle of his relatives.

In regard to his intellectual powers, they derived their superiority not only from the liberality of nature, but from the conscientiousness with which they were improved. He early felt the importance of a generous and extensive culture of the mind, and systematically connected with professional studies the pursuit of general literature. He was a striking example of the influence of an operative and enlightened moral sense over the intellect. His views were distinguished not so much by boldness and excursiveness as by clearness, steadiness, judiciousness, and truth; and these characteristic properties of his understanding derived their strength, if not existence, from that fairness, rectitude, simplicity, and that love of the true and useful, which entered so largely into his moral constitution. The objects on which he thought and wrote, did not offer themselves to him in the bright hues of inspired imagination, but in the forms, dimensions, and colours of reality; and yet there was no tameness in his conception, for the moral relations of things, the most sublime of all relations, he traced with eagerness and delighted to unfold.

Accordingly, in all his writings we perceive the marks of an understanding surrounded by a clear and warm moral atmosphere. His intellect, we repeat it, was excited and developed very much by moral and religious principle. It was not naturally creative, restless, stirred by a bright and burning imagination. The strong power within was conscience, enlightened and exalted by religion; and this sent life through the intellect and conferred or heightened the qualities by which it was distinguished.

Of his professional character we know nothing by personal observation; but we do know, that in a metropolis where the standard of professional talent and purity is high, he was eminent. We have understood, that he was at once a scientific and practical lawyer, uniting comprehensive views of jurisprudence, and laborious research into general principles, with a singular accuracy, and most conscientious fidelity, in investigating the details of the causes in which he was engaged. The spontaneous tribute of the members of the Suffolk Bar to so young a brother, is perhaps without precedent. It deserves to be mentioned among his claims to esteem, that he was not usurped by a profession to which he was so devoted; that his thirst for legal knowledge and distinction, though so ardent, left him free for such a variety of exertions and acquisitions.

Of his industry, we have had occasion frequently to speak, and it was not the least striking trait in his character. We need no other proof of this, than his early eminence in a profession, which offers no prizes to genius unaccompanied by application, and whose treasures are locked up in books, which hold out no lures to imagination or taste, and which can only interest a mind disposed to patient and intense exertion. We recur, however, to his industry, not so much because it distinguished him, as from the desire of removing what seems to us a false impression, that he fell a victim to excessive application. That he was occasionally guilty of intemperate study (a crime in the eye of a refined morality, because it sacrifices future and extensive usefulness to immediate acquisition), is probably true; but less guilty, we apprehend, than many who are not

charged with excess. His social nature, his love of general literature, and his regular use of exercise, gave as great and frequent relaxation to his mind, as studious men generally think necessary; nor ought his example to lose its power, by the apprehension, that to follow his steps will be to descend with him to an early grave.

This excellent man, it has pleased God to take from us; and to take without warning, when our hope was firmest, and his prospects of usefulness and prosperity were to human eyes, unclouded. That such a course should be so short, is the general sorrow. But ought we to think it short? In the best sense his life was long. To be the centre of so many influences; to awaken through so large a circle sentiments of affection and esteem; to bear effectual testimony to the reality of religion; to exalt the standard of youthful character; to adorn a profession, to which the administration of public justice, and the care of our civil institutions are peculiarly confided; to uphold and strengthen useful associations; to be the friend of the poor and ignorant, and a model for the rich and improved; to live in the hearts of friends, and to die amidst general, deep, unaffected lamentation; these surely are not evidences of a brief existence. "Honourable age is not that, which standeth in length of time, nor which is measured by number of years; but wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."

Still the question may be asked, "Why was he taken from so much usefulness?" Were that state laid open to us, into which he is removed, we should have an answer. We should see, that this world is not the only one where intellect is unfolded, and the heart and active powers find objects. We might see, that such a spirit as his, was needed now in another and nobler province of the creation; and that all God's providence towards him had been training and fitting him to be born, if we may so speak, at this very time, into the future world, there to perform offices and receive blessings which only a mind so framed and gifted could sustain and enjoy. He is not lost. Jesus, whom he followed, "hath abolished death." Thought, affection,

piety, usefulness, do not die. If they did, we should do well to hang his tomb with sackcloth, or rather to obliterate every trace and recollection of his tomb and his name, for then a light, more precious than the sun's, is quenched for ever. But he is not lost, nor is he exiled from his true happiness. An enlightened, just and good mind, is a citizen of the universe, and has faculties and affections which correspond to all God's works. Why would we limit it to earth, perhaps the lowest world in this immense creation? Why shall not the spirit, which has given proof of its divine origin and heavenly tendency, be suffered to rise to its proper abode, to a holier community, to a vision of God, under which earthly and mortal natures would sink and be dissolved?

One benefit of the early removal of such a man as Mr. Gallison, is obvious. We learn from it, how early in life the great work of life may begin, and how successfully be prosecuted. Had he lived to advanced years, the acquisitions of his youth would have been forgotten and lost in those of riper years. His character would have been an invaluable legacy, but chiefly to the mature and aged. And surely if his early death shall exalt the aims and purposes of the young; if piety, now postponed to later years, to a winter which bears no such fruit, shall be esteemed the ornament and defence of that interesting and tempted age; if our young men shall learn from him that they belong to God and society; then his early death may prove as useful as a protracted life.

We shall add but one more remark. The general sorrow which followed Mr. Gallison to the tomb, was not only honourable to him, but to the community. For he had no dazzling qualities. His manners were not imposing, nor was he aided by uncommon patronage. His worth was unobtrusive, mild, retiring, and left to win its own way to notice and honour. Yet how few young men have reared such a monument in the memories and hearts of the community? Amidst charges of degeneracy, and with real grounds of humiliation, we should deem it a privilege to live in a state of society, in which such a character as Mr. Gallison's is so generally understood, and is recompensed with such heartfelt and generous praise.

DISCOURSES.

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Romans i. 16.—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

PART I.

THESE words of Paul are worthy of his resolute and disinterested spirit. In uttering them he was not an echo of the multitude, a servile repeater of established doctrines. The vast majority around him were ashamed of Jesus. The cross was then coupled with infamy. Christ's name was scorned as a malefactor's, and to profess his religion was to share his disgrace. Since that time what striking changes have occurred! The cross now hangs as an ornament from the neck of beauty. It blazes on the flags of navies, and the standards of armies. Millions bow before it in adoration, as if it were a shrine of the Divinity. Of course, the temptation to be ashamed of Jesus is very much diminished. Still it is not wholly removed. Much of the homage now paid to Christianity is outward, political, worldly, and paid to its corruptions much more than to its pure and lofty spirit; and accordingly its conscientious and intrepid friends must not think it a strange thing to be encountered with occasional coldness or reproach. We may still be tempted to be ashamed of our religion, by being thrown among sceptics, who deny and deride it. We may be tempted to be ashamed of the simple and rational doctrines of Christ, by being brought into connexion with narrow-minded zealots, who enforce their dark and perhaps degrading peculiarities as essential to salvation. We may be tempted to be ashamed of

his pure, meek, and disinterested precepts, by being thrown among the licentious, self-seeking, and vindictive. Against these perils we should all go armed. To be loyal to truth and conscience under such trials is one of the signal proofs of virtue. No man deserves the name of Christian, but he who adheres to his principles amidst the unbelieving, the intolerant, and the depraved.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." So said Paul. So would I say. Would to God that I could catch the spirit as well as the language of the Apostle, and bear my testimony to Christianity with the same heroic resolution. Do any ask why I join in this attestation to the gospel? Some of my reasons I propose now to set before you; and in doing so I ask the privilege of speaking, as the Apostle has done, in the first person; of speaking in my own name, and of laying open my own mind in the most direct language. There are cases, in which the ends of public discourse may be best answered by the frank expression of individual feeling; and this mode of address, when adopted with such views, ought not to be set down to the account of egotism.

I proceed to state the reasons why I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; and I begin with one so important, that it will occupy the present discourse.

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it is *true*. This is my first reason. The religion is *true*, and no consideration but this could induce me to defend it. I adopt it, not because it is popular, for false and ruinous systems have enjoyed equal reputation; nor because it is thought to uphold the order of society, for I believe that nothing but truth can be permanently useful. It is *true;* and I say this not lightly, but after deliberate examination. I am not repeating the accents of the nursery. I do not affirm the truth of Christianity, because I was so taught before I could inquire, or because I was brought up in a community pledged to this belief. It is not unlikely, that my faith and zeal will be traced by some to those sources; and believing such imputations to be groundless, fidelity to the cause of truth binds me to repel them. The circumstance of

having been born and educated under Christianity, so far from disposing me to implicit faith, has often been to me the occasion of serious distrust of our religion. On observing how common it is for men of all countries and names, whether Christians, Jews, or Mahometans, to receive the religion of their fathers, I have again and again asked myself, whether I too was not a slave, whether I too was not blindly walking in the path of tradition, and yielding myself as passively as others to an hereditary faith. I distrust and fear the power of numbers and of general opinion over my judgment; and few things incite me more to repel a doctrine than intolerant attempts to force it on my understanding. Perhaps my Christian education and connexions have inclined me to scepticism, rather than bowed my mind to authority.

It may still be said, that the pride and prejudices and motives of interest, which belong to my profession as a Christian minister, throw a suspiciousness over my reasoning and judgment on the present subject. I reply, that to myself I seem as free from biases of this kind, as the most indifferent person. I have no priestly prepossessions. I know and acknowledge the corruptions and perversions of the ministerial office from the earliest age of the church. I reprobate the tyranny which it exercises so often over the human mind. I recognise no peculiar sanctity in those who sustain it. I think, then, that I come to the examination of Christianity with as few binding partialities as any man. I indeed claim no exemption from error; I ask no implicit faith in my conclusions; I care not how jealously and thoroughly my arguments are sifted. I only ask, that I may not be prejudged as a servile or interested partisan of Christianity. I ask that I may be heard as a friend of truth, desirous to aid my fellow-creatures in determining a question of great and universal concern. I appear as the advocate of Christianity, solely because it approves itself to my calmest reason as a revelation from God, and as the purest, brightest light which He has shed on the human mind. I disclaim all other motives. No policy, no vassalage to opinion, no dread of reproach

even from the good, no private interest, no desire to uphold a useful superstition, nothing in short but a deliberate conviction of the truth of Christianity, induces me to appear in its ranks. I should be ashamed of it, did I not believe it true.

In discussing this subject, I shall express my convictions strongly: I shall speak of infidelity as a gross and perilous error. But in so doing I beg not to be understood, as passing sentence on the character of individual unbelievers. I shall show that the Christian religion is true, is from God; but I do not therefore conclude, that all who reject it are the enemies of God, and are to be loaded with reproach. I would uphold the truth without ministering to uncharitableness. The criminality, the damnable guilt of unbelief in all imaginable circumstances, is a position which I think untenable; and persuaded as I am, that it prejudices the cause of Christianity, by creating an antipathy between its friends and opposers, which injures both, and drives the latter into more determined hostility to the truth, I think it worthy of a brief consideration in this stage of the discussion.

I lay it down as a principle, that unbelief, considered in itself, has no moral quality, is neither a virtue nor a vice, but must receive its character, whether good or bad, from the dispositions or motives, which produce or pervade it. Mere acts of the understanding are neither right nor wrong. When I speak of faith as a holy or virtuous principle, I extend the term beyond its primitive meaning, and include in it not merely the assent of the intellect, but the disposition or temper, by which this assent is determined, and which it is suited to confirm; and I attach as broad a signification to unbelief, when I pronounce it a crime. The truth is, that the human mind, though divided by our philosophy into many distinct capacities, seldom or never exerts them separately, but generally blends them in one act. Thus in forming a judgment, it exerts the will and affections, or the moral principles of our nature, as really as the power of thought. Men's passions and interests mix with, and are expressed in the decisions of the intellect. In the

Scriptures, which use language freely, and not with philosophical strictness, faith and unbelief are mental acts of this complex character, or joint products of the understanding and heart; and on this account alone, they are objects of approbation or reproof. In these views, I presume, reflecting Christians of every name agree.

According to these views, opinions cannot be laid down as unerring and immutable signs of virtue and vice. The very same opinion may be virtuous in one man and vicious in another, supposing it, as is very possible, to have originated in different states of mind. For example, if through envy and malignity I should rashly seize on the slightest proofs of guilt in my neighbour, my judgment of his criminality would be morally wrong. Let another man arrive at the same conclusion, in consequence of impartial inquiry and love of truth, and his decision would be morally right. Still more, according to these views, it is possible for the belief of Christianity to be as criminal as unbelief. Undoubtedly the reception of a system, so pure in spirit and tendency as the Gospel, is to be regarded in general as a favourable sign. But let a man adopt this religion, because it will serve his interest and popularity; let him shut his mind against objections to it, lest they should shake his faith in a gainful system; let him tamper with his intellect, and for base and selfish ends exhaust its strength in defence of the prevalent faith, and he is just as criminal in believing, as another would be in rejecting Christianity under the same bad impulses. Our religion is at this moment adopted, and passionately defended by vast multitudes, on the ground of the very same pride, worldliness, love of popularity, and blind devotion to hereditary prejudices, which led the Jews and Heathens to reject it in the primitive age; and the faith of the first is as wanting in virtue, as was the infidelity of the last.

To judge of the character of faith and unbelief, we must examine the times and the circumstances in which they exist. At the first preaching of the Gospel, to believe on Christ was a strong proof of an upright mind; to enlist among his followers, was to forsake ease, honour, and worldly success; to confess him was

an act of signal loyalty to truth, virtue, and God. To believe in Christ at the present moment has no such significance. To confess him argues no moral courage. It may even betray a servility and worldliness of mind. These remarks apply in their spirit to unbelief. At different periods, and in different conditions of society, unbelief may express very different states of mind. Before we pronounce it a crime, and doom it to perdition, we ought to know the circumstances under which it has sprung up, and to inquire with candour whether they afford no palliation or defence. When Jesus Christ was on earth, when his miracles were wrought before men's eyes, when his voice sounded in their ears, when not a shade of doubt could be thrown over the reality of his supernatural works, and not a human corruption had mingled with his doctrine, there was the strongest presumption against the uprightness and the love of truth of those who rejected him. He knew too the hearts and the lives of those who surrounded him, and saw distinctly in their envy, ambition, worldliness, sensuality, the springs of their unbelief; and accordingly he pronounced it a crime. Since that period, what changes have taken place! Jesus Christ has left the world. His miracles are events of a remote age, and the proofs of them, though abundant, are to many imperfectly known; and, what is incomparably more important, his religion has undergone corruption, adulteration, disastrous change, and its likeness to its founder is in no small degree effaced. The clear, consistent, quickening truth, which came from the lips of Jesus, has been exchanged for a hoarse jargon and vain babblings. The stream, so pure at the fountain, has been polluted and poisoned through its whole course. Not only has Christianity been overwhelmed by absurdities, but by impious doctrines, which have made the Universal Father, now a weak and vain despot, to be propitiated by forms and flatteries, and now an almighty torturer, fore-ordaining multitudes of his creatures to guilt, and then glorifying his justice by their everlasting woe. When I think what Christianity has become in the hands of politicians and priests, how it has been

shaped into a weapon of power, how it has crushed the human soul for ages, how it has struck the intellect with palsy and haunted the imagination with superstitious phantoms, how it has broken whole nations to the yoke, and frowned on every free thought; when I think how, under almost every form of this religion, its ministers have taken it into their own keeping, have hewn and compressed it into the shape of rigid creeds, and have then pursued by menaces of everlasting woe whoever should question the divinity of these works of their hands; when I consider, in a word, how, under such influences, Christianity has been and still is exhibited, in forms which shock alike the reason, conscience, and heart, I feel deeply, and painfully, what a different system it is from that which Jesus taught, and I dare not apply to unbelief the terms of condemnation which belonged to the infidelity of the primitive age.

Perhaps I ought to go further. Perhaps I ought to say, that to reject Christianity under some of its corruptions, is rather a virtue than a crime. At the present moment, I would ask, whether it is a vice to doubt the truth of Christianity, as it is manifested in Spain and Portugal? When a patriot in those benighted countries, who knows Christianity only as a bulwark of despotism, as a rearer of inquisitions, as a stern jailor immuring wretched woman in the convent, as an executioner stained and reeking with the blood of the friends of freedom; I say, when the patriot, who sees in our religion the instrument of these crimes and woes, believes and affirms that it is not from God, are we authorised to charge his unbelief on dishonesty and corruption of mind, and to brand him as a culprit? May it not be, that the spirit of Christianity in his heart emboldens him to protest with his lips against what bears the name? And if he thus protest, through a deep sympathy with the oppression and sufferings of his race, is he not nearer the kingdom of God than the priest and inquisitor who boastingly and exclusively assume the Christian name? Jesus Christ has told us, that "this is the condemnation" of the unbelieving, "that they love darkness rather than light;" and who does not see, that

this ground of condemnation is removed, just in proportion as the light is quenched, or Christian truth is buried in darkness and debasing error?

I know I shall be told that a man in the circumstances now supposed, would still be culpable for his unbelief, because the Scriptures are within his reach, and these are sufficient to guide him to the true doctrines of Christ. But in the countries of which I have spoken, the Scriptures are not common; and if they were, I apprehend that we should task human strength too severely, in requiring it, under every possible disadvantage, to gain the truth from this source alone. A man, born and brought up in the thickest darkness, and amidst the grossest corruptions of Christianity, accustomed to hear the Scriptures disparaged, accustomed to connect false ideas with their principal terms, and wanting our most common helps of criticism, can hardly be expected to detach from the mass of error which bears the name of the Gospel, the simple principles of the primitive faith. Let us not exact too much of our fellow-creatures. In our zeal for Christianity, let us not forget its spirit of equity and mercy.—In these remarks I have taken an extreme case. I have supposed a man subjected to the greatest disadvantages in regard to the knowledge of Christianity. But obstacles less serious may exculpate the unbeliever. In truth, none of us can draw the line which separates innocence and guilt in this particular. To measure the responsibility of a man, who doubts or denies Christianity, we must know the history of his mind, his capacity of judgment, the early influences and prejudices to which he was exposed, the forms under which the religion and its proofs first fixed his thoughts, and the opportunities since enjoyed of eradicating errors, which struck root before the power of trying them was unfolded. We are not his judges. At another and an unerring tribunal he must give account.

I cannot then join in the common cry against infidelity as the sure mark of a corrupt mind. That unbelief often has its origin in evil dispositions I cannot doubt. The character of the unbeliever often forces us to acknowledge, that he rejects Christianity to escape its rebukes;

that its purity is its chief offence; that he seeks infidelity as a refuge from fear and virtuous restraint. But to impute these unholy motives to a man of pure life, is to judge rashly, and it may be unrighteously. I cannot look upon unbelief as essentially and unfailingly a crime. But I do look upon it as among the greatest of calamities. It is the loss of the chief aid of virtue, of the mightiest power over temptation, of the most quickening knowledge of God, of the only unfailing light, of the only sure hope. The unbeliever would gain unspeakably by parting with every possession for the truth which he doubts or rejects. And how shall we win him to the faith? Not by reproach, by scorn, by tones of superiority; but by paying due respect to his understanding, his virtues, and his right of private judgment; by setting before him Christianity in its simple majesty, its reasonableness, and wonderful adaptation to the wants of our spiritual nature; by exhibiting its proofs without exaggeration, yet in their full strength; and, above all, by showing in our own characters and lives, that there is in Christianity a power to purify, elevate, and console, which can be found in no human teaching. These are the true instruments of conversion. The ignorant and superstitious may indeed be driven into a religion by menace and reproach. But the reflecting unbeliever cannot but distrust a cause which admits such weapons. He must be reasoned with as a man, an equal, and a brother. Perhaps we may silence him for a time, by spreading through the community a fanatical excitement, and a persecuting hatred of infidelity. But as by such processes Christianity would be made to take a more unlovely and irrational form, its secret foes would be multiplied; its brightest evidence would be dimmed, its foundation sapped, its energy impaired; and whenever the time should arrive for throwing off the mask (and that time would come), we should learn, that in the very ranks of its nominal disciples, there had been trained a host of foes, who would burn to prostrate the intolerant faith, which had so long sealed their lips, and trampled on the rights and freedom of the human mind.

According to these views, I do not condemn the un-

believer, unless he bear witness against himself by an immoral and irreligious life. It is not given me to search his heart. But this power is given to himself, and as a friend, I call upon him to exert it; I ask him to look honestly into his own mind, to question his past life, and to pronounce impartial sentence on the causes of his unbelief. Let him ask himself, whether he has inquired into the principles and proofs of Christianity deliberately and in the love of truth; whether the desire to discover and fulfil his duties to God and his fellow-creatures has governed his examination; whether he has surrendered himself to no passions or pursuits which religion and conscience rebuke, and which bar the mind and sear the heart against the truth. If, thus self-questioned, his heart acquit him, let no man condemn him, and let him heed no man's condemnation. But if conscience bear witness against him, he has cause to suspect and dread his unbelief. He has reason to fear, that it is the fruit of a depraved mind, and that it will ripen and confirm the depravity from which it sprung.

I know that there are those, who will construe what they will call my lenity towards unbelief, into treachery towards Christianity. There are those who think, that unless scepticism be ranked among the worst crimes, and the infidel be marked out for abhorrence and dread, the multitude of men will lose their hold on the Gospel. An opinion more discreditable to Christianity cannot easily be advanced by its friends. It virtually admits, that the proofs of our religion, unless examined under the influence of terror, cannot work conviction; that the Gospel cannot be left like other subjects, to the calm and unbiassed judgment of mankind. It discovers a distrust of Christianity, with which I have no sympathy. And here I would remark, that the worst abuses of our religion have sprung from this cowardly want of confidence in its power. Its friends have feared, that it could not stand without a variety of artificial buttresses. They have imagined, that men must now be bribed into faith by annexing to it temporal privileges, now driven into it by menaces and inquisitions, now attracted by gorgeous forms, now awed by mysteries and superstitions; in a

word, that the multitude must be imposed upon, or the religion will fall. I have no such distrust of Christianity; I believe in its invincible powers. It is founded in our nature. It meets our deepest wants. Its proofs as well as principles are adapted to the common understandings of men, and need not to be aided by appeals to fear or any other passion, which would discourage inquiry or disturb the judgment. I fear nothing for Christianity, if left to speak in its own tones, to approach men with its unveiled, benignant countenance. I do fear much from the weapons of policy and intimidation, which are framed to uphold the imagined weakness of Christian truth.

I now come to the great object of this discourse—an exhibition of the proofs of Christianity;—and I begin with a topic which is needed to prepare some, if not many, to estimate these proofs fairly, and according to their true weight. I begin with the position, That there is nothing in the general idea of Revelation at which Reason ought to take offence, nothing inconsistent with any established truth, or with our best views of God and Nature. This topic meets a prejudice not very rare. I repeat it then. Revelation is nothing incredible, nothing which carries contradiction on its face, nothing at war with any great principles of reason or experience. On hearing of God's teaching us by some other means than the fixed order of nature, we ought not to be surprised, nor ought the suggestion to awaken resistance in our minds.

Revelation is not at war with nature. From the necessity of the case, the earliest instruction must have come to human beings from this source. If our race had a beginning (and nothing but the insanity of Atheism can doubt this), then its first members, created as they were without human parentage, and having no resource in the experience of fellow-creatures who had preceded them, required an immediate teaching from their Creator; they would have perished without it. Revelation was the very commencement of human history, the foundation of all later knowledge and improvement. It was an essential part of the course of Providence, and must not then be regarded as a discord in God's general system.

Revelation is not at war with nature. Nature prompts us to expect it from the relation which God bears to the human race. The relation of Creator is the most intimate which can subsist; and it leads us to anticipate a free and affectionate intercourse with the creature. That the Universal Father should be bound by a parental interest to his offspring, that he should watch over and assist the progress of beings whom he has enriched with the divine gifts of reason and conscience, is so natural a doctrine, so accordant with his character, that various sects, both philosophical and religious, both anterior and subsequent to Christianity, have believed, not only in general revelation, but that God reveals himself to every human soul. When I think of the vast capacities of the human mind, of God's nearness to it, and unbounded love towards it, I am disposed to wonder, not that revelations have been made, but that they have not been more variously vouchsafed to the wants of mankind.

Revelation has a striking agreement with the chief method, which God has instituted for carrying forward individuals and the race, and is thus in harmony with his ordinary operations. Whence is it that we all acquire our chief knowledge? Not from the outward universe; not from the fixed laws of material nature; but from intelligent beings, more advanced than ourselves. The teachings of the wise and good are our chief aids. Were our connexion with superior minds broken off, had we no teacher but nature, with its fixed laws, its unvarying revolutions of night and day and seasons, we should remain for ever in the ignorance of childhood. Nature is a volume, which we can read only by the help of an intelligent interpreter. The great law under which man is placed, is, that he shall receive illumination and impulse from beings more improved than himself. Now revelation is only an extension of this universal method of carrying forward mankind. In this case, God takes on himself the office to which all rational beings are called. He becomes an immediate teacher to a few, communicating to them a higher order of truths than had before been attained, which they in

turn are to teach to their race. Here is no new power or element introduced into the system, but simply an enlargement of that agency on which the progress of man chiefly depends.

Let me next ask you to consider, why or for what end God has ordained, as the chief means of human improvement, the communication of light from superior to inferior minds; and if it shall then appear, that revelation is strikingly adapted to promote a similar though more important end, you will have another mark of agreement between revelation and his ordinary providence. Why is it that God has made men's progress dependent on instruction from their fellow-beings? Why are the more advanced commissioned to teach the less informed? A great purpose, I believe the chief purpose, is, to establish interesting relations among men, to bind them to one another by generous sentiments, to promote affectionate intercourse, to call forth a purer love than could spring from a communication of mere outward gifts. Now it is rational to believe, that the Creator designs to bind his creatures to himself as truly as to one another, and to awaken towards himself even stronger gratitude, confidence, and love; for these sentiments towards God are more happy and ennobling than towards any other being; and it is plain that revelation, or immediate divine teaching, serves as effectually to establish these ties between God and man, as human teaching to attach men to one another. We see then in revelation an end corresponding to what the Supreme Being adopts in his common providence. That the end here affirmed is worthy of his interposition, who can doubt? His benevolence can propose no higher purpose, than that of raising the minds and hearts of his creatures to himself. His parental character is a pledge, that he must intend this ineffable happiness for his rational offspring; and revelation is suited to this end, not only by unfolding new doctrines in relation to God, but by the touching proof which it carries in itself of the special interest which he takes in his human family. There is plainly an expression of deeper concern, a more affectionate character, in this mode of instruction, than in teaching

us by the fixed order of nature. Revelation is God speaking to us in our own language, in the accents which human friendship employs. It shows a love, breaking through the reserve and distance, which we all feel to belong to the method of teaching us by his works alone. It fastens our minds on him. We can look on nature, and not think of the Being whose glory it declares; but God is indissolubly connected with, and indeed is a part of the idea of revelation. How much nearer does this direct intercourse bring him to the mass of mankind! On this account revelation would seem to me important, were it simply to repeat the teachings of nature. This reiteration of great truths in a less formal style, in kinder, more familiar tones, is peculiarly fitted to awaken the soul to the presence and benignity of its heavenly Parent. I see then in revelation a purpose corresponding with that for which human teaching was instituted. Both are designed to bring together the teacher and the taught in pure affections.

Let me next ask you to consider, what is the kind of instruction which the higher minds among men are chiefly called to impart to the inferior. You will here see another agreement between revelation and that ordinary human teaching, which is the great instrument of improving the race. What kind of instruction is it, which parents, which the aged and experienced, are most anxious to give to the young, and on which the safety of this class mainly depends? It is instruction in relation to the future, to their adult years, such as is suited to prepare them for the life that is opening before them. It is God's will, when he gives us birth, that we should be forewarned of the future stages of our being, of approaching manhood or womanhood, of the scenes, duties, labours, through which we are to pass; and for this end he connects us with beings, who have traversed the paths on which we are entering, and whose duty it is to train us for a more advanced age. Instruction in regard to futurity is the great means of improvement. Now the Christian revelation has for its aim to teach us on this very subject; to disclose the life which is before us, and to fit us for it. A future state is its constant

burden. That God should give us light in regard to that state, if he design us for it, is what we should expect from his solicitude to teach us in regard to what is future in our earthly existence. Nature thirsts for, and analogy almost promises, some illumination on the subject of human destiny. This topic I shall insist on more largely hereafter. I wish now simply to show you the agreement of revelation in this particular, with the ordinary providence of God.

I proceed to another order of reflections, which to my own mind, is particularly suited to meet the vague idea, that revelation is at war with nature. To judge of nature, we should look at its highest ranks of beings. We should inquire of the human soul, which we all feel to be a higher existence than matter. Now I maintain, that there are in the human soul wants, deep wants, which are not met by the influences and teachings, which the ordinary course of things affords. I am aware that this is a topic to provoke distrust, if not derision, in the low-minded and sensual; but I speak what I do know; and nothing moves me so little as the scoffs of men who despise their own nature. One of the most striking views of human nature, is the disproportion between what it conceives and thirsts for, and what it finds or can secure in the range of the present state. It is prone to stretch beyond its present bounds. Ideas of excellence and happiness spring up, which it cannot realise now. It carries within itself a standard, of which it daily and hourly falls short. This self-contradiction is the source of many sharp pains. There is, in most men, a dim consciousness, at least, of being made for something higher than they have gained, a feeling of internal discord, a want of some stable good, a disappointment in merely outward acquisitions; and in proportion as these convictions and wants become distinct, they break out in desires of illumination and aids from God not found in nature. I am aware, that the wants of which I have spoken are but faintly developed in the majority of men. Accustomed to give their thoughts and strength to the outward world, multitudes do not penetrate and cannot interpret their own souls. They impute to outward

causes the miseries which spring from an internal fountain. They do not detain, and are scarcely conscious of the better thoughts and feelings, which sometimes dart through their minds. Still there are few, who are not sometimes dissatisfied with themselves, who do not feel the wrong which they have done to themselves, and who do not desire a purer and nobler state of mind. The suddenness, with which the multitude are thrilled by the voice of fervent eloquence, when it speaks to them of the spiritual world in tones of reality, shows the deep wants of human nature even amidst ignorance and degradation. But all men do not give themselves wholly to outward things. There are those, and not a few, who are more true to their nature, and ought therefore to be regarded as its more faithful representatives; and in such, the wants, of which I have spoken, are unfolded with energy. There are those, who feel painfully the weight of their present imperfection; who are fired by rare examples of magnanimity and devotion; who desire nothing so intensely as power over temptation, as elevation above selfish passions, as conformity of will to the inward law of duty, as the peace of conscious rectitude and religious trust; who would rejoice to lay down the present life for that spotless, bright, disinterested virtue, of which they have the type or germ in their own minds. Such men can find no resource but in God, and are prepared to welcome a revelation of his merciful purposes as an unspeakable gift. I say then that the human mind has wants which nature does not answer. And these are not accidental feelings, unaccountable caprices, but are deep, enduring, and reproduced in all ages under one or another form. They breathe through the works of genius; they burn in the loftiest souls. Here are principles implanted by God in the highest order of his creatures on earth, to which revelation is adapted, and I say then that revelation is any thing but hostility to nature.

I will offer but one more view in illustration of this topic. I ask you to consider, on what principle of human nature the Christian revelation is intended to bear and to exert influence, and then to inquire whether the peculiar importance of this principle be not a foundation

for peculiar interposition in its behalf. If so, revelation may be said to be a demand of the human soul, and its imagined incongruity with nature will disappear. For what principle or faculty of the mind then was Christianity intended? It was plainly not given to enrich the intellect by teaching philosophy, or to perfect the imagination and taste by furnishing sublime and beautiful models of composition. It was not meant to give sagacity in public life, or skill and invention in common affairs. It was undoubtedly designed to develope all these faculties, but secondarily, and through its influence on a higher principle. It addresses itself primarily, and is especially adapted, to the moral power in man. It regards and is designed for man as a moral being, endued with conscience or the principle of duty, who is capable of that peculiar form of excellence which we call righteousness or virtue, and exposed to that peculiar evil, guilt. Now the question offers itself, Why does God employ such extraordinary means for promoting virtue rather than science, for aiding conscience rather than intellect and our other powers? Is there a foundation in the moral principle for peculiar interpositions in its behalf? I affirm, that there is. I affirm, that a broad distinction exists between our moral nature and our other capacities. Conscience is the Supreme power within us. Its essence, its grand characteristic, is Sovereignty. It speaks with a divine authority. Its office is to command, to rebuke, to reward; and happiness and honour depend on the reverence with which we listen to it. All our other powers become useless and worse than useless, unless controlled by the principle of duty. Virtue is the supreme good, the supreme beauty, the divinest of God's gifts, the health and harmonious unfolding of the soul, and the germ of immortality. It is worth every sacrifice, and has power to transmute sacrifices and sufferings into crowns of glory and rejoicing. Sin, vice, is an evil of its own kind, and not to be confounded with any other. Who does not feel at once the broad distinction between misfortune and crime, between disease of body and turpitude of soul? Sin, vice, is at war with the highest power in our own

breasts, and in the universe. It makes a being odious to himself, and arms against him the principle of rectitude in God and in all pure beings. It poisons or dries up the fountains of enjoyment, and adds unspeakable weight to the necessary pains of life. It is not a foreign evil, but a blight and curse in the very centre of our being. Its natural associates are fear, shame, and self-torture; and whilst it robs the present of consolation, it leaves the future without hope. Now I say, that in this peculiar ruin wrought by moral evil, and in this peculiar worth of moral goodness, we see reasons for special interpositions of God in behalf of virtue, in resistance of sin. It becomes the Infinite Father to manifest peculiar interest in the moral condition and wants of his creatures. Their great and continued corruption is an occasion for peculiar methods of relief; and a revelation given to restore them, and carry them forward to perfection, has an end which justifies, if it does not demand, this signal expression of parental love.

The preceding views have been offered not as sufficient to prove that a revelation has been given, but for the purpose of removing the vague notion that it is at war with nature, and of showing its consistency with the spirit and principles of the divine administration. I proceed now to consider the direct and positive proofs of Christianity, beginning with some remarks on the nature and sufficiency of the evidence on which it chiefly relies.

Christianity sprung up about eighteen hundred years ago. Of course its evidences are to be sought in history. We must go back to the time of its birth, and understand the condition in which it found the world, as well as the circumstances of its origin, progress, and establishment; and happily, on these points, we have all the light necessary to a just judgment. We must not imagine, that a religion, which bears the date of so distant an age, must therefore be involved in obscurity. We know enough of the earliest times of Christianity to place the question of its truth within our reach. The past may be known as truly as the present; and I deem this principle so important in the present discussion, that I ask your attention to it.

The past, I have said, may be known; nor is this all; we derive from it our most important knowledge. Former times are our chief instructors. Our political, as well as religious institutions, our laws, customs, modes of thinking, arts of life, have come down from earlier ages, and most of them are unintelligible without a light borrowed from history.

Not only are we able to know the nearest of past ages, or those which touch on our own times, but those which are remote. No educated man doubts any more of the victories of Alexander or Cæsar, before Christ, than of Napoleon's conquests in our own day. So open is our communication with some ages of antiquity, so many are the records which they have transmitted, that we know them even better than nearer times; and a religion which grew up eighteen hundred years ago, may be more intelligible and accompanied with more decisive proofs of truth or falsehood, than one which is not separated from us by a fourth part of that duration.

From the nature of things, we may and must know much of the past; for the present has grown out of the past, is its legacy, fruit, representative, and is deeply impressed with it. Events do not expire at the moment of their occurrence. Nothing takes place without leaving traces behind; and these are in many cases so distinct and various, as to leave not a doubt of their cause. We all understand how, in the material world, events testify of themselves to future ages. Should we visit an unknown region, and behold masses of lava covered with soil of different degrees of thickness, and surrounding a blackened crater, we should have as firm a persuasion of the occurrence of remote and successive volcanic eruptions, as if we had lived through the ages in which they took place. The chasms of the earth would report how terribly it had been shaken, and the awful might of long-extinguished fires would be written in desolations which ages had failed to efface. Now conquest, and civil and religious revolutions, leave equally their impressions on society, leave institutions, manners, and a variety of monuments, which are inexplicable without them, and which, taken together, admit not a doubt of

their occurrence. The past stretches into the future, the present is crowded with it, and can be interpreted only by the light of history.

But besides these effects and remains of earlier times, we have other and more distinct memorials of the past, which, when joined by the former, place it clearly within our knowledge. I refer to books. A book is more than a monument of a preceding age. It is a voice coming to us over the interval of centuries. Language, when written, as truly conveys to us another's mind as when spoken. It is a species of personal intercourse. By it the wise of former times give us their minds as really, as if by some miracle they were to rise from the dead and communicate with us by speech.

From these remarks, we learn that Christianity is not placed beyond the reach of our investigations by the remoteness of its origin; and they are particularly applicable to the age in which the Gospel was first given to the world. Our religion did not spring up before the date of authentic history. Its birth is not hidden in the obscurity of early and fabulous times. We have abundant means of access to its earliest stages; and, what is very important, the deep and peculiar interest which Christianity has awakened, has fixed the earnest attention of the most learned and sagacious men on the period of its original publication, so that no age of antiquity is so thoroughly understood. Christianity sprung up at a time, when the literature and philosophy of Greece were spread far and wide, and had given a great impulse to the human mind; and when Rome by unexampled conquests had become a centre and bond of union to the civilised world and to many half-civilised regions, and had established a degree of communication between distant countries before unknown. We are not then left to grope our way by an unsteady light. Our means of information are various and great. We have incontestible facts in relation to the origin of our religion, from which its truth may be easily deduced. A few of these facts, which form the first steps of our reasoning on this subject, I will now lay before you.

1. First, then, we know with certainty the *time* when

Christianity was founded. As to this fact there is and can be no doubt. Heathen and Christian historians speak on this point with one voice. Christianity was first preached in the age of Tiberius. Not a trace of it exists before that period, and afterwards the marks and proofs of its existence are so obvious and acknowledged as to need no mention. Here is one important fact placed beyond doubt.

2. In the next place, we know the *place* where Christianity sprung up. No one can dispute the country of its birth. Its Jewish origin is not only testified by all history, but is stamped on its front and woven into its frame. The language in which it is conveyed, carries us at once to Judea. Its name is derived from Jewish prophecy. None but Jews could have written the New Testament. So natural, undesigned, and perpetual are the references and allusions of the writers to the opinions and manners of that people, so accustomed are they to borrow from the same source the metaphors, similitudes, and types, by which they illustrate their doctrines, that Christianity, as to its outward form, may be said to be steeped in Judaism. We have then another established fact. We know where it was born.

3. Again, we know the individual by whom Christianity was founded. We know its Author, and from the nature of the case this fact cannot but be known. The founder of a religion is naturally and necessarily the object of general inquiry. Wherever the new faith is carried, the first and most eager questions are, "From whom does it come? On whose authority does it rest?" Curiosity is never more intense, than in regard to the individual who claims a divine commission, and sends forth a new religion. He is the last man to be overlooked or mistaken. In the case of Christianity especially, its founder may be said to have been forced on men's notice, for his history forms an essential part of his religion. Christianity is not an abstract doctrine, which keeps its author out of sight. He is its very soul. It rests on him, and finds its best illustration in his life. These reflections however may be spared. The simple consideration, that Christianity must have had an

author, and that it has been always ascribed to Jesus, and to no one else, places the great fact, which I would establish, beyond doubt.

4. I next observe, that we not only know the founder of Christianity, but the ministers by whom he published and spread it through the world. A new religion must have propagators, first teachers, and with these it must become intimately associated. A community can no more be ignorant as to the teachers who converted it to a new faith, than as to the conqueror who subjected it to a new government; and where the art of writing is known and used for recording events, the latter fact will not more certainly be transmitted to posterity than the former. We have the testimony of all ages, that the men called Apostles were the first propagators of Christianity, nor have any others been named as sustaining this office; and it is impossible that, on such a point, such testimony should be false.

5. Again; we know, not only when, and where, and by whom Christianity was introduced;—we know, from a great variety of sources, what in the main this religion was, as it came from the hands of its founder. To assure ourselves on this point, we need not recur to any sacred books. From the age following that of Christ and the Apostles, down to the present day, we have a series, and an almost numberless host, of writers on the subject of Christianity; and whilst we discover in them a great diversity of opinions, and opposite interpretations of some of Christ's teachings, yet on the whole they so far agree in the great facts of his history, and in certain great principles of his religion, that we cannot mistake as to the general character of the system which he taught. There is not a shadow of reason for the opinion, that the original system which Jesus taught was lost, and a new one substituted and fastened on the world in his name. The many and great corruptions of Christianity did not and could not hide its principal features. The greatest corruptions took place in the century which followed the death of the Apostles, when certain wild and visionary sects endeavoured to establish a union between the new religion and the false philoso-

phy to which they had been wedded in their heathen state. You may judge of their character and claims, when I tell you, that they generally agreed in believing that the God who made the world, and who was worshipped by the Jews, was not the supreme God, but an inferior and imperfect Deity; and that matter had existed from eternity, and was essentially and unchangeably evil. Yet these sects endeavoured to sustain themselves on the writings which the great body of Christians received and honoured as the works of the Apostles; and, amidst their delusions, they recognised and taught the miracles of Christ, his resurrection, and the most important principles of his religion; so that the general nature of Christianity, as it came from its founder, may be ascertained beyond a doubt. Here another great point is fixed.

6. I have now stated to you several particulars relating to Christianity, which admit no doubt; and these indisputable facts are of great weight in a discussion of the Christian evidences. There is one point more, of importance, which cannot be settled so expeditiously as these. I hope, however, enough may be said to place it beyond doubt, without exceeding the limits of a discourse; and I invite to it your serious attention. I say, then, that we not only know in general what Christianity was at its first promulgation; but we know precisely what its first propagators taught, for we have their writings. We have their religion under their own hands. We have particularly four narratives of the life, works, and words of their Master, which put us in possession of his most private as well as public teaching. It is true, that without these writings we should still have strong arguments for the truth of Christianity; but we should be left in doubt as to some of its important principles; and its internal evidence, which corroborates, and, as some think, exceeds the external, would be very much impaired. The possession of the writings of the first propagators of the Gospel, must plainly render us great aid in judging of its claims. These writings, I say, we have, and this point I would now establish.

I am aware that the question, to which I now ask

your attention, is generally confined to professed students. But it is one on which men of good sense are competent to judge, and its great importance gives it a claim to the serious consideration of every Christian.

The question is, whether the four Gospels are genuine, that is, whether they were written by those to whom they are ascribed. To answer it, let us consider how we determine the genuineness of books in general. I begin with the obvious remark, that to know the author of a work, it is not necessary that we should be eyewitnesses of its composition. Perhaps of the numberless publications of the present day, we have not seen one growing under the pen of the writer. By far the greater number come to us across the ocean, and yet we are as confident in regard to their authors as if we had actually seen them first committed to paper. The ascription of a book to an individual, during his life, by those who are interested in him, and who have the best means of knowing the truth, removes all doubts as to its author. A strong and wide-spread conviction of this kind must have a cause, and can only be explained by the actual production of the work by the reputed writer. It should here be remembered that there is a strong disposition in men to ascertain the author of an important and interesting work. We have had a remarkable illustration of this in our own times. The author of Waverley saw fit to wrap himself for a time in mystery; and what was the consequence? No subject in politics or science was agitated more generally than the question to whom the work belonged. It was not only made a topic in almost every periodical publication, but one book was expressly written to solve the problem. The instance, I know, was remarkable; but this inquisitiveness in regard to books is a principle of our nature, and is particularly active, when the book in debate is a work of singular authority.

I have spoken of the confidence which we feel as to the authors of books published in our own times. But our certainty is not confined to these. Every reading man is as sure that Hume and Robertson wrote the histories which bear their names, as that Scott has in our own times sent out the life of Bonaparte. Those emi-

nent men were born more than a hundred years ago, and they died before the birth of most to whom I speak. But the communication between their times and our own is so open and various, that we know their literary labours as well as those of the present day. Not a few persons now living have had intercourse with some of the contemporaries of these historians; and through this channel in particular, we of this generation have the freest access to the preceding, and know its convictions in regard to the authors of interesting books as fully as if we had lived in it ourselves. That the next age will have the same communication with the present, as the present has with the past, and that these convictions of our predecessors will be transmitted by us to our immediate successors, you will easily comprehend; and you will thus learn the respect which is due to the testimony of the third generation on such a subject.

In what has now been said, we see with what confidence and certainty we determine the authors of writings published in our own age or in the times nearest our own. These remarks may be easily applied to the productions of antiquity. When the question arises, whether an ancient book was written by the individual whose name it bears, we must inquire into the opinion of his contemporaries, or of those who succeeded his contemporaries so nearly as to have intimate communication with them. The competency of these to a just judgment on the subject, we have seen; and if they have transmitted their convictions to us in undisputed writings, it ought to be decisive. On this testimony, we ascribe many ancient books to their authors with the firmest faith; and, in truth, we receive as genuine many works of antiquity on far inferior proofs. There are many books of which no notice can be found for several ages after the time of their reputed authors. Still the fact, that as soon as they are named, they are ascribed undoubtingly, and by general consent, to certain authors, is esteemed a sufficient reason for regarding them as their productions, unless some opposite proofs can be adduced. This general reception of a work as having come from a particular writer, is an effect which requires a cause; and the most

natural and obvious explanation of his being named rather than any other man, is, that he actually composed it.

I now proceed to apply these principles to the four histories of Christ, commonly called Gospels. The question is, what testimony respecting their authors has come down to us from the age of their reputed authors, or from times so near it and so connected with it, as to be faithful representatives of its convictions? By this testimony, as we have seen, the genuineness of the books must be decided. And I begin with admitting, that no evidence on the subject is to be derived from contemporary writers. No author, living in the age of the first propagators of Christianity, has named the Gospels. The truth is, that no undisputed writings of their immediate converts have been preserved. A few tracts, bearing the name of men acquainted with the Apostles have indeed come down to us; but so much uncertainty hangs over their origin, that I am unwilling to ground on them any reasoning. Nor ought we to wonder that the works of private Christians of the primitive age are wanting to us; for that was an age of persecution, when men were called to *die* rather than *write* for their religion. I suppose too, that during the times of the Apostles, little importance was attached to any books but such as were published or authorised by these eminent men; and, of course, what was written by others was little circulated, and soon passed away.

The undisputed writings of the early Christians begin about seventy years after the times of the Apostles. At that period there probably remained none of the first converts or contemporaries of the Apostles. But there were living not a few who had been acquainted with the last survivors of that honoured generation. When the Apostles died, they must have left behind a multitude who had known them; and of these not a few must have continued many years, and must have had intercourse with the new generation which sprung up after the Apostolic age. Now in the times of this generation, the series of Christian authors begins. Although, then, we have no productions of the Apostolic age to bear witness to the Gospels, we have writings from the ages

which immediately followed it, and which, from their connexion with it, ought, as we have seen, to be regarded as most credible witnesses on such a subject. What then do these writings teach? I answer, Their testimony is clear and full. We learn from them, not only that the Gospels existed in those times, but that they were widely diffused, that they were received as the writings of the men whose names they bear, and that they were regarded with a confidence and veneration yielded to no other books. They are quoted as books given by their revered authors to the Christian community, to be public and enduring records of their religion; and they are spoken of as read in the assemblies which were held for the inculcation and extension of the faith. I ask you to weigh this testimony. It comes to us from times intimately connected with the first age. Had the Gospels been invented and first circulated among the generation which succeeded the Apostles, could that generation have received them, as books known and honoured before their time, and as the most authoritative and precious records transmitted to them from their fathers and predecessors? The case may seem too plain to require explanation; but as many are unaccustomed to inquiries of this kind, I will offer an example. You well know that nearly a century ago, a great religious excitement was spread through this country, chiefly by the ministry of Whitfield. Suppose now that four books were at this moment to come forth, bearing the names of four of the most distinguished men of that period, of Whitfield, of the venerable Edwards, and of two others intimately associated with them in their religious labours; and suppose these books not only to furnish narratives of what then took place, but to contain principles and rules urged with all possible earnestness and authority on the disciples or admirers of these religious leaders;—do you think it possible that their followers of the present day, and the public, could be made to believe, that these books had been published by their pretended authors, had been given as standards to a religious community, and had been handed down as venerated books, when no such works had been heard

of before? This is but a faint illustration; for Whitfield and Edwards are names of little weight or authority, compared with what the Apostles possessed in the primitive church.

We have, then, strong and sufficient reasons for believing, that the histories called Gospels were received in the times of the Apostles, as works of those whose names they bear; and were handed down as theirs with veneration by their contemporaries. Will any say that all this may be true, but that during the lives of the Apostles, books forged in their names may have obtained general currency? To this extravagant supposition, it would be sufficient to reply, according to my previous remarks, that the general ascription of a book to an author during his life, is the ground on which the genuineness of the most unquestioned works depends. But I would add, that this evidence is singularly conclusive in the present case. The original propagators of Christianity, to whom the Gospels were ascribed, were, from their office, among the public men of their age. They must have travelled extensively. They must have been consulted by inhabitants of various countries on the subject of the new religion. They must have been objects of deep interest to the first converts. They lived in the world's eye. Their movements, visits, actions, words, and writings, must have awakened attention. Books from their hands must have produced a great sensation. We cannot conceive a harder task, than to impose writings, forged in their name, on Christians and Christian communities, thus intimately connected with them, and so alive to their efforts for the general cause. The opportunities of detecting the falsehood were abundant; and to imagine falsehood to prosper under such circumstances, argues a strange ignorance of literary history and of human nature.

Let me add, that the motives of the first Christians, to ascertain distinctly whether writings ascribed to the Apostles were truly theirs, were the strongest which can be conceived. I have mentioned, in my previous remarks, the solicitude of the world to learn the author of Waverley. The motive was mere curiosity; and yet to

what earnest inquiries were multitudes impelled? The name of the author was of little or no moment. The book was the same, its portraits equally vivid, its developements of the human heart equally true and powerful, whether the author were known or not. So it is with most works. Books of science, philosophy, morals, and polite literature, owe their importance and authority not to their writers, but to their contents. Now the four Gospels were different in this respect. They were not the same to the first converts, come from whom they might. If written by Apostles or their associates, they had an authority and sacredness, which could belong to them on no other condition. They became books of laws to the Christian community, became binding on their consciences and lives. To suppose such books received blindly and without inquiry, by great numbers who had all the means of ascertaining their true origin, is to suppose the first converts insane or idiots; a charge which I believe their worst enemies will not think of urging against them, and which the vast superiority of their religious and moral system to all the philosophical systems of the times abundantly disproves.

I have now finished what is called the historical or external evidence of the genuineness of the four Gospels; that is, the evidence drawn from their being received and revered as the writings of the Apostles in the first and succeeding ages of Christianity. But before leaving this head, I would notice a difficulty which may press on some minds. I suppose that many of you have heard, that very early, probably about the beginning of the second century, writings were forged in the name of the Apostles; and some may ask, why the four Gospels may not belong to this description? The answer is, that the Gospels, as we have seen, were received and honoured by the great body of Christians, in the first and succeeding ages of Christianity, as writings of the Apostles or their associates. The forgeries are known to be forgeries, because they were not so received, because they were held in no veneration, but were rejected as fictitious by the Christian community. Here is a broad line of distinction. It must not surprise us, that

in the great excitement produced by the first publication and triumphs of Christianity, a variety of extravagant notions should spring up, and that attempts should be made to blend the new religion with established systems; and as the names of the first propagators of the Gospel were held in peculiar reverence, we cannot wonder that the leaders of sects should strive to attach an Apostolic sanction to their opinions, by sending abroad partly true and partly false accounts of the preaching of these eminent men. Whether these writings were sent forth as compositions of the Apostles, or only as records of their teaching, made by their hearers, is a question open to debate; but as to their origin there can be little doubt. We can account for their existence, and for the degree of favour which they obtained. They were generally written to give authority to the dreams or speculations of some extravagant sects, to which they were very much confined, and with which most of them passed away. There is not a shadow of reason for confounding with these our Gospels, which were spread from the beginning through the Christian world, and were honoured and transmitted as the works of the venerated men by whose names they were called.

Having now given the historical argument in favour of the genuineness of the Gospels, that is, in favour of their being written by their reputed authors, I now add, that there are several presumptive and internal proofs of the same truth, which, taken alone, have great weight, and, when connected with the preceding, form an amount of evidence not easily withstood. I have time to glance at only a few of these.

It is a presumption in favour of the claims of an author, that the book ascribed to him has never been assigned to any other individual. Now I am not aware, that unbelief has in any age named any individuals, to whom the Gospels may be traced rather than to those whose names they bear. We are not called upon to choose between different writers. In common cases this absence of rival claims is considered as decisive in favour of the reputed author, unless the books themselves give ground to suspect another hand. Why shall not

this principle be applied to the Gospels as well as to all other works?

Another presumption in favour of the belief that these histories were written by the first propagators of Christianity, arises from the consideration, that such books were to be expected from them. It is hardly conceivable that the Apostles, whose zeal carried abroad their system through so many nations, and who lived in an age of reading and writing, should leave their doctrines to tradition, should neglect the ordinary precaution of embodying them in the only permanent form, the only one in which they could be accurately transmitted, and by which all other systems were preserved. It is reasonable to suppose that they wrote what they taught; and if so, it is hardly possible that their writings should be lost. Their accounts must have been received and treasured up, just as we know the Gospels were cherished; and hence arises a strong presumption in favour of the genuineness of these books.

Again, these books carry one strong mark of having been written in the time of the Apostles. They contain no traces of later times, nothing to indicate that the authors belonged to another age. Now to those of you who are acquainted with such subjects, it is hardly necessary to observe, how difficult it is for a writer to avoid betraying the period in which he lives; and the cause is very obvious. Every age has its peculiarities, has manners, events, feelings, words, phrases of its own; and a man brought up among these falls so naturally under their influence, and incorporates them so fully with his own mind, that they break out and manifest themselves almost necessarily and without his consciousness, in his words and writings. The present makes an impression incomparably more vivid than the past, and accordingly traces of the real age of a writer may almost always be discovered by a critical eye, however anxious he may be to assume the style and character of a preceding age. Now the Gospels betray no marks of the feelings, manners, contentions, events of a period later than that in which the Apostles lived; and when we consider, that, with the exception of Luke's history,

they have all the appearance of having come from plain men, unused to composition, this argument applies to them with peculiar force. Under this head, I might place before you the evidence of the genuineness of these books, derived from the language, dialect, idiom, in which they are written. You can easily understand, that by these helps the country and age of a writing may often be traced; but the argument belongs to the learned. It may however be satisfactory to know, that the profoundest scholars see in the dialect and idiom of the Gospels, a precise accordance with what might be expected of Jews, writing in the age of the Apostles.

Another internal proof, and one within the reach of all, may be gathered from the style and character of the evangelical narratives. They are written with the simplicity, minuteness, and ease, which are the natural tones of truth, which belong to writers thoroughly acquainted with their subjects, and writing from reality. You discover in them nothing of the labour, caution, and indistinctness, which can scarcely be escaped by men who are assuming a character not their own, and aiming to impose on the world. There is a difference which we have all discerned and felt, though we cannot describe it, between an honest, simple-hearted witness who tells what he has seen or is intimately acquainted with, and the false witness who affects an intimate knowledge of events and individuals, which are in whole or in part his own fabrication. Truth has a native frankness, an unaffected freedom, a style and air of its own, and never were narratives more strongly characterised by these than the Gospels. It is a striking circumstance in these books, that whilst the life and character which they portray, are the most extraordinary in history, the style is the most artless. There is no straining for epithets or for elevation of language to suit the dignity of the great personage who is the subject. You hear plain men, telling you what they know of a character, which they venerated too much to think of adorning or extolling it. It is also worthy of remark, that the character of Jesus, though the most peculiar and exalted in history, though the last to be invented

and the hardest to be sustained, is yet unfolded through a great variety of details and conditions, with perfect unity and consistency. The strength of this proof can only be understood by those who are sufficiently acquainted with literary history to appreciate the difficulty of accomplishing a consistent and successful forgery. Such consistency is, in the present case, an almost infallible test. Suppose four writers of a later age, to have leagued together in the scheme of personating the first propagators of Christianity, and of weaving, in their name, the history of their Master's life. Removed as these men would have been from the original, and having no model or type of his character in the elevation of their own minds, they must have portrayed him with an unsteady hand, must have marred their work with incongruous features, must have brought down their hero on some occasions to the ordinary views and feelings of men, and in particular must have been warped in their selection and representation of incidents, by the private purpose which led them to this singular co-operation. That four writers, under such circumstances, should sustain throughout so peculiar and elevated a character as Jesus, and should harmonise with each other in the delineation, would be a prodigy which no genius, however pre-eminent, could achieve. I say, then, that the narratives bear strong internal marks of having been drawn from the living original, by those who had the best means of knowing his character and life.

So various, strong, sufficient are the proofs that the four Gospels are the works of the first preachers of Christianity whose names they bear. I will only add, that the genuineness of few ancient books is supported by proofs equally strong. Most of the works which have come down to us from antiquity, and which are ascribed to their reputed writers with undoubting confidence, are so ascribed on evidence inferior to that on which the claims of the Evangelists rest. On this point therefore not a doubt should remain.

Here I pause. The proofs of Christianity, which are involved in or founded on the facts now established, will be the subjects of future discussion.

PART II.

I have now stated some of the great facts relating to the origin of Christianity, of which we have clear and full proof. We know when and where this religion sprung up. We know its Author, and the men whom he employed as the first propagators of his doctrine. We know the great features of the religion as it was originally taught; and still more, we have the writings of its first teachers, by which its precise character is placed beyond doubt. I now proceed to lay before you some of the arguments in support of Christianity, which are involved in or are founded on these facts. I must confine myself to a few, and will select those to which some justice may be done in the compass of a discourse.

I. I believe Christianity to be true, or to have come from God, because it seems to me impossible to trace it to any other origin. It must have a cause, and no other adequate cause can be assigned. The incongruity between this religion and all the circumstances amidst which it grew up, is so remarkable, that we are compelled to look beyond and above this world for its explanation. When I go back to the origin of Christianity, and place myself in the age and country of its birth, I can find nothing in the opinions of men, or in the state of society, which can account for its beginning or diffusion. There was no power on earth to create or uphold such a system. There was nothing congenial with it in Judaism, in heathenism, or in the state of society among the most cultivated communities. If you study the religions, governments, and philosophical systems of that age, you will discover in them not even a leaning towards Christianity. It sprung up in opposition to all, making no compromise with human prejudice or passion; and it sprung up, not only superior to all, but possessing at its very beginning a perfection, which has been the

admiration of ages, and which, instead of being dimmed by time, has come forth more brightly, in proportion to the progress of the human mind.

I know, indeed, that at the origin of our religion, the old heathen worship had fallen into disrepute among the enlightened classes throughout the Roman Empire, and was gradually losing its hold on the populace. Accordingly some have pretended that Christianity grew from the ruins of the ancient faith. But this is not true; for the decline of the heathen systems was the product of causes singularly adverse to the origination of such a system as Christianity. One cause was, the monstrous depravity of the age, which led multitudes to an utter scorn of religion in all its forms and restraints, and which prepared others to exchange their old worship for still grosser and more licentious superstitions, particularly for the magical arts of Egypt. Surely this corruption of manners, this wide-wasting moral pestilence, will not be considered by any as a germ of the Christian religion. Another principal agent, in loosening the foundations of the old systems, was philosophy, a noble effort indeed of the human intellect, but one which did nothing to prepare the way for Christianity. The most popular systems of philosophy at the birth of Christianity, were the Sceptical and the Epicurean, the former of which turned religion into a jest, denied the possibility of arriving at truth, and cast the mind on an ocean of doubt in regard to every subject of inquiry; whilst the latter placed happiness in ease, inculcated a calm indifference both as to this world and the next, and would have set down the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice, of suffering for truth and duty, as absolute insanity. Now I ask, in what single point do these systems touch Christianity, or what impulse could they have given to its invention? There was indeed another philosophical sect of a nobler character, I mean the Stoical, who maintained that virtue was the supreme good, and it certainly nurtured some firm and lofty spirits amidst the despotism which then ground all classes in the dust. But the self-reliance, sternness, apathy, and pride of the Stoic, his defiance and scorn of mankind, his want of sympathy with human

suffering, and his extravagant exaggerations of his own virtue, placed this sect in singular opposition to Christianity; so that our religion might as soon have sprung from Scepticism and Epicureanism, as from Stoicism. There was another system, if it be worthy of the name, which prevailed in Asia, and was not unknown to the Jews, often called the Oriental philosophy. But this, though certainly an improvement on the common heathenism, was visionary and mystical, and placed happiness in an intuition or immediate perception of God, which was to be gained by contemplation and ecstacies, by emaciation of the body, and desertion of the world. I need not tell you how infinitely removed was the practical, benevolent spirit of Christianity, from this spurious sanctity and profitless enthusiasm. I repeat it then, that the various causes which were silently operating against the established heathen systems in the time of Christ, had no tendency to suggest and spread such a religion as he brought, but were as truly hostile to it as the worst forms of heathenism.

We cannot find then the origin of Christianity in the heathen world. Shall we look for it in the Jewish? This topic is too familiar to need much exposition. You know the character, feelings, expectations of the descendants of Abraham at the appearing of Jesus; and you need not be told, that a system more opposed to the Jewish mind than that which he taught, cannot be imagined. There was nothing friendly to it in the soil or climate of Judea. As easily might the luxuriant trees of our forests spring from the sands of an Arabian desert. There was never perhaps a national character so deeply stamped as the Jewish. Ages after ages of unparalleled suffering have done little to wear away its indelible features. In the time of Jesus the whole influence of education and religion was employed to fix it in every member of the state. In the bosom of this community, and among its humblest classes, sprung up Christianity, a religion as unfettered by Jewish prejudices, as untainted by the earthly, narrow views of the age, as if it had come from another world. Judaism was all around it, but did not mar it by one trace, or sully its brightness

by a single breath. Can we find, then, the cause of Christianity in the Jewish any more than in the heathen world?

Christianity, I maintain, was not the growth of any of the circumstances, principles, or feelings of the age in which it appeared. In truth, one of the great distinctions of the Gospel, is, that it did not *grow*. The conception which filled the mind of Jesus, of a religion more spiritual, generous, comprehensive, and unworldly than Judaism, and destined to take its place, was not of gradual formation. We detect no signs of it, and no efforts to realise it, before his time; nor is there an appearance of its having been gradually matured by Jesus himself. Christianity was delivered from the first in its full proportions, in a style of singular freedom and boldness, and without a mark of painful elaboration. The suddenness with which this religion broke forth, this maturity of the system at the very moment of its birth, this absence of gradual developement, seems to me a strong mark of its divine original. If Christianity be a human invention, then I can be pointed to something in the history of the age, which impelled and fitted the mind of its author to its production; then I shall be able to find some germ of it, some approximation to it, in the state of things amidst which it first appeared. How was it, that from thick darkness there burst forth at once meridian light? Were I told that the sciences of the civilised world had sprung up to perfection at once, amidst a barbarous horde, I should pronounce it incredible. Nor can I easily believe, that Christianity, the religion of unbounded love, a religion which broke down the barrier between Jew and Gentile, and the barriers between nations, which proclaimed one Universal Father, which abolished forms and substituted the worship of the soul, which condemned alike the false greatness of the Roman and the false holiness of the Jew, and which taught an elevation of virtue, that the growing knowledge of succeeding ages has made more admirable;—I say, I cannot easily believe that such a religion was suddenly, immediately struck out by human ingenuity, among a people distinguished by bigotry and

narrowness of spirit, by superstitious reliance on outward worship, by hatred and scorn of other nations, and by the proud, impatient hope of soon bending all nations to their sway.

Christianity, I repeat it, was not the growth of the age in which it appeared. It had no sympathy with that age. It was the echo of no sect or people. It stood alone at the moment of its birth. It used not a word of conciliation. It stooped to no error or passion. It had its own tone, the tone of authority and superiority to the world. It struck at the root of what was everywhere called glory, reversed the judgments of all former ages, passed a condemning sentence on the idols of this world's admiration, and held forth, as the perfection of human nature, a spirit of love so pure and divine, so free and full, so mild and forgiving, so invincible in fortitude, yet so tender in its sympathies, that even now few comprehend it in its extent and elevation. Such a religion had not its origin in this world.

I have thus sought to unfold one of the evidences of Christianity. Its incongruity with the age of its birth, its freedom from earthly mixtures; its original, unborrowed, solitary greatness; and the suddenness with which it broke forth amidst the general gloom, these are to me strong indications of its divine descent. I cannot reconcile them with a human origin.

II. Having stated the argument in favour of Christianity, derived from the impossibility of accounting for it by the state of the world at the time of its birth, I proceed in the second place to observe, that it cannot be accounted for by any of the motives which instigate men to the fabrication of religions. Its aims and objects are utterly irreconcileable with imposture. They are pure, lofty, and worthy of the most illustrious delegate of Heaven. This argument deserves to be unfolded with some particularity.

Men act from motives. The inventors of religions have purposes to answer by them. Some systems have been framed by legislators to procure reverence to their laws, to bow the minds of the people to the civil power; and some have been forged by priests, to establish their

sway over the multitude, to form themselves into a dominant caste, and to extort the wealth of the industrious. Now I affirm, that Christianity cannot be ascribed to any selfish, ambitious, earthly motive. It is suited to no private end. Its purpose is generous and elevated, and thus bears witness to its heavenly origin.

The great object which has seduced men to pretend to inspiration, and to spread false religions, has been Power, in one form or another, sometimes political power, sometimes spiritual, sometimes both. Is Christianity to be explained by this selfish aim? I answer No. I affirm that the love of power is the last principle to be charged on the Founder of our religion. Christianity is distinguished by nothing more than by its earnest enforcement of a meek and humble spirit, and by its uncompromising reprobation of that passion for dominion, which had in all ages made the many the prey of the few, and had been worshipped as the attribute and impulse of the greatest minds. Its tone on this subject was original, and altogether its own. Jesus felt, as none had felt before, and as few feel now, the baseness of selfish ambition, and the grandeur of that benevolence which waives every mark of superiority, that it may more effectually bless mankind. He taught this lesson, not only in the boldest language, but, accommodating himself to the emblematical mode of religious instruction prevalent in the East, he set before his disciples a little child as their pattern, and himself washed their feet. His whole life was a commentary on his teaching. Not a trace of the passion for distinction and sway can be detected in the artless narratives of his historians. He wore no badge of superiority, exacted no signs of homage, coveted no attentions, resented no neglect. He discouraged the ruler who prostrated himself before him with flattering salutations, but received with affectionate sensibility the penitent who bathed his feet with her tears. He lived with his obscure disciples as a friend, and mixed freely with all ranks of the community. He placed himself in the way of scorn, and advanced to meet a death, more suited than any other imaginable event, to entail infamy on his name. Stronger marks of an infinite superiority

to what the world calls glory, cannot be conceived than we meet in the history of Jesus.

I have named two kinds of power, Political and Spiritual, as the ordinary objects of false religions. I wish to show you more particularly the elevation of Christianity above these aims. That the Gospel was not framed for political purposes, is too plain to require proof; but its peculiarity in this respect is not sufficiently considered. In ancient times, religion was everywhere a national concern. In Judea the union between religion and government was singularly close; and political sovereignty was one of the chief splendours with which the Jewish imagination had surrounded the expected Messiah. That in such an age and country, a religion should arise, which hardly seems to know that government exists; which makes no reference to it except in a few general inculcations of obedience to the civil powers; which says not a word nor throws out a hint of allying itself with the state; which assumes to itself no control of political affairs, and intermeddles with no public concerns; which has no tendency, however indirect, to accumulate power in particular hands; which provides no form of national worship as a substitute for those which it was intended to destroy; and which treats the distinctions of rank and office as worthless in comparison with moral influence and an unostentatious charity;—that such a religion should spring up in such a state of the world, is a remarkable fact. We here see a broad line between Christianity and other systems, and a striking proof of its originality and elevation. Other systems were framed for communities; Christianity approached men as individuals. It proposed, not the glory of the state, but the perfection of the individual mind. So far from being contrived to build up political power, Christianity tends to reduce and gradually to supplant it, by teaching men to substitute the sway of truth and love for menace and force, by spreading through all ranks a feeling of brotherhood altogether opposed to the spirit of domination, and by establishing principles which nourish self-respect in every human being, and teach the obscurest to look with an undazzled eye on the most powerful of their race.

Christianity bears no mark of the hands of a politician. One of its main purposes is to extinguish the very spirit which the ambitious statesman most anxiously cherishes, and on which he founds his success. It proscribes a narrow patriotism, shows no mercy to the spirit of conquest, requires its disciples to love other countries as truly as their own, and enjoins a spirit of peace and forbearance in language so broad and earnest, that not a few of its professors consider war in every shape and under all circumstances as a crime. The hostility between Christianity and all the political maxims of that age, cannot easily be comprehended at the present day. No doctrines were then so rooted, as that conquest was the chief interest of a nation, and that an exclusive patriotism was the first and noblest of social virtues. Christianity, in loosening the tie which bound man to the state, that it might connect him with his race, opposed itself to what was deemed the vital principle of national safety and grandeur, and commenced a political revolution as original and unsparing as the religious and moral reform at which it aimed.

Christianity, then, was not framed for political purposes. But I shall be asked whether it stands equally clear of the charge of being intended to accumulate spiritual power. Some may ask, whether its Founder was not instigated by the passion for religious domination, whether he did not aim to subdue men's minds, to dictate to the faith of the world, to make himself the leader of a spreading sect, to stamp his name as a prophet on human history, and thus to secure the prostration of multitudes to his will, more abject and entire than kings and conquerors can achieve.

To this I might reply by what I have said of the character of Jesus, and of the spirit of his religion. It is plain, that the Founder of Christianity had a perception quite peculiar to himself, of the moral beauty and greatness of a disinterested, meek, and self-sacrificing spirit, and such a person was not likely to meditate the subjugation of the world to himself. But leaving this topic, I observe, that on examining Christianity we discover none of the features of a religion framed for spirit-

ual domination. One of the infallible marks of such a system is, that it makes some terms with the passions and prejudices of men. It does not, cannot provoke and ally against itself all the powers of the world, whether civil or religious. Christianity was throughout uncompromising and exasperating, and threw itself in the way of hatred and scorn. Such a system was any thing but a scheme for seizing the spiritual empire of the world.

There is another mark of a religion which springs from the love of spiritual domination. It infuses a servile spirit. Its author, desirous to stamp his name and image on his followers, has an interest in curbing the free action of their minds, imposes on them arbitrary doctrines, fastens on them badges which may separate them from others, and besets them with rules, forms, and distinctive observances, which may perpetually remind them of their relation to their chief. Now I see nothing in Christianity of this enslaving legislation. It has but one aim, which is, not to exalt its teacher, but to improve the disciple; not to fasten Christ's name on mankind, but to breathe into them his spirit of universal love. Christianity is not a religion of forms. It has but two ceremonies, as simple as they are expressive; and these hold so subordinate a place in the New Testament, that some of the best Christians question or deny their permanent obligation. Neither is it a narrow creed, or a mass of doctrines which find no support in our rational nature. It may be summed up in a few great, universal, immutable principles, which reason and conscience, as far as they are unfolded, adopt and rejoice in, as their own everlasting laws, and which open perpetually enlarging views to the mind. As far as I am a Christian, I am free. My religion lays not on me one chain. It does not prescribe a certain range for my mind, beyond which nothing can be learned. It speaks of God as the Universal Father, and sends me to all his works for instruction. It does not confine me within a mechanical ritual, does not enjoin forms, attitudes, and hours of prayer, does not descend to details of dress and food, does not put on me one outward badge. It teaches and

enkindles love to God, but commands no precise expressions of this sentiment. It prescribes prayer; but lays the chief stress on the prayer of the closet, and treats all worship as worthless but that of the mind and heart. It teaches us to do good, but leaves us to devise for ourselves the means by which we may best serve mankind. In a word, the whole religion of Christ may be summed up in the love of God and of mankind, and it leaves the individual to cherish and express this spirit by the methods most accordant with his own condition and peculiar mind. Christianity is eminently the religion of freedom. The views which it gives of the parental, impartial, universal goodness of God, and of the equal right of every human being to inquire into his will, and its inculcations of candour, forbearance, and mutual respect, contribute alike to freedom of thought and enlargement of the heart. I repeat it, Christianity lays on me no chains. It is any thing but a contrivance for spiritual domination.

I am aware that I shall be told, that Christianity, if judged by its history, has no claim to the honourable title of a religion of liberty. I shall be told, that no system of heathenism ever weighed more oppressively on men's souls; that the Christian ministry has trained tyrants, who have tortured, now the body with material fire, and now the mind with the dread of fiercer flames, and who have proscribed and punished free thought and free speech as the worst of crimes. I have no disposition to soften the features of priestly oppression; but I say, let not Christianity be made to answer for it. Christianity gives its ministers no such power. They have usurped it in the face of the sternest prohibitions, and in opposition to the whole spirit of their Master. Christianity institutes no priesthood, in the original and proper sense of that word. It has not the name of priest among its officers; nor does it confer a shadow of priestly power. It invests no class of men with peculiar sanctity, ascribing to their intercessions a special influence over God, or suspending the salvation of the private Christian on ceremonies which they alone can administer. Jesus indeed appointed twelve of his immediate disciples

to be the great instruments of propagating his religion; but nothing can be simpler than their office. They went forth to make known through all nations the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus Christ; and this truth they spread freely and without reserve. They did not give it as a mystery to a few who were to succeed them in their office, and according to whose direction it was to be imparted to others. They communicated it to the whole body of converts, to be their equal and common property, thus securing to all the invaluable rights of the mind. It is true, they appointed ministers or teachers in the various congregations which they formed; and in that early age, when the religion was new and unknown, and when oral teaching was the only mode of communicating it, there seems to have been no way for its diffusion but this appointment of the most enlightened disciples to the work of instruction. But the New Testament no where intimates, that these men were to monopolise the privilege of studying their religion, or of teaching it to others. Not a single man can claim under Christianity the right to interpret it exclusively, or to impose his interpretation on his brethren. The Christian minister enjoys no nearer access to God, and no promise of more immediate illumination, than other men. He is not entrusted with the Christian records more than they, and by these records it is both their right and duty to try his instructions. I have here pointed out a noble peculiarity of Christianity. It is the religion of liberty. It is in no degree tainted with the passion for spiritual power. "Call no man master, for ye are all brethren," is its free and generous inculcation, and to every form of freedom it is a friend and defence.

We have seen that Christianity is not to be traced to the love of power, that master-passion in the authors of false religions. I add, that no other object of a selfish nature could have led to its invention. The Gospel is not of this world. At the time of its origin no ingenuity could have brought it to bear on any private or worldly interest. Its spirit is self-denial. Wealth, ease, and honour, it counts among the chief perils of life, and it

insists on no duty more earnestly than on that of putting them to hazard and casting them from us, if the cause of truth and humanity so require. And these maxims were not mere speculations or rhetorical commonplaces in the times of Christ and his Apostles. The first propagators of Christianity were called upon to practise what they preached, to forego every interest on its account. They could not but foreknow, that a religion so uncompromising and pure would array against them the world. They did not merely take the chance of suffering, but were sure that the whole weight of scorn, pain, and worldly persecution, would descend on their heads. How inexplicable, then, is Christianity by any selfish object, or any low aim?

The Gospel has but one object, and that too plain to be mistaken. In reading the New Testament, we see the greatest simplicity of aim. There is no lurking purpose, no by-end, betraying itself through attempts to disguise it. A perfect singleness of design runs through the records of the religion, and is no mean evidence of their truth. This end of Christianity is the moral perfection of the human soul. It aims and it tends, in all its doctrines, precepts, and promises, to rescue men from the power of moral evil; to unite them to God by filial love, and to one another in the bonds of brotherhood; to inspire them with a philanthropy as meek and unconquerable as that of Christ; and to kindle intense desire, hope, and pursuit of celestial and immortal virtue.

And now, I ask, what is the plain inference from these views? If Christianity can be traced to no selfish or worldly motive, if it were framed, not for dominion, not to compass any private purpose, but to raise men above themselves, and to conform them to God, can we help pronouncing it worthy of God? And to whom but to God can we refer its origin? Ought we not to recognise in the first propagators of such a faith the holiest of men, the friends of their race, and the messengers of Heaven? Christianity, from its very nature, repels the charge of imposture. It carries in itself the proof of pure intention. Bad men could not have conceived it, much less have adopted it as the great object of their

lives. The supposition of selfish men giving up every private interest to spread a system which condemned themselves, and which tended only to purify mankind, is an absurdity as gross as can be found in the most irrational faith. Christianity, therefore, when tried by its motives, approves itself to be of God.

III. I now proceed to another and very important ground of my belief in the divine origin of Christianity. Its truth was attested by miracles. Its first teachers proved themselves the ministers of God by supernatural works. They did what man cannot do, what bore the impress of a divine power, and what thus sealed the divinity of their mission. A religion so attested must be true. This topic is a great one, and I ask your patient attention to it.

I am aware that a strong prejudice exists in some minds against the kind of evidence which I have now adduced. Miracles seem to them to carry a confutation in themselves. The presumption against them seems next to infinite. In this respect, the present times differ from the past. There have been ages, when men believed any thing and every thing; and the more monstrous the story, the more eagerly was it received by the credulous multitude. In the progress of knowledge men have come to see, that most of the prodigies and supernatural events in which their forefathers believed, were fictions of fancy, or fear, or imposture. The light of knowledge has put to flight the ghosts and witches which struck terror into earlier times. We now know, that not a few of the appearances in the heavens, which appalled nations, and were interpreted as precursors of divine vengeance, were natural effects. We have learned, too, that a highly excited imagination can work some of the cures once ascribed to magic; and the lesson taught us by these natural solutions of apparent miracles, is, that accounts of supernatural events are to be sifted with great jealousy and received with peculiar care.

But the result of this new light thrown on nature and history is, that some are disposed to discredit all miracles indiscriminately. So many having proved groundless,

a sweeping sentence of condemnation is passed on all. The human mind, by a natural reaction, has passed from extreme credulousness, to the excess of incredulity. Some persons are even hardy enough to deride the very idea of a miracle. They pronounce the order of nature something fixed and immutable, and all suspensions of it incredible. This prejudice, for such it is, seems to deserve particular attention; for, until it is removed, the evidences of Christian miracles will have little weight. Let us examine it patiently and impartially.

The sceptic tells me, that the order of nature is fixed. I ask him, By whom or by what is it fixed? By an iron fate? By an inflexible necessity? Does not nature bear the signature of an intelligent Cause? Does not the very idea of its order imply an ordaining or disposing Mind? Does not the universe, the more it is explored, bear increasing testimony to a Being superior to itself? Then the order of nature is fixed by a Will which can reverse it. Then a Power equal to miracles exists. Then miracles are not incredible.

It may be replied, that God indeed *can* work miracles, but that he *will* not. He will not? And how does the sceptic know this? Has God so told him? This language does not become a being of our limited faculties; and the presumptuousness which thus makes laws for the Creator, and restricts his agency to particular modes, is as little the spirit of true philosophy as of religion.

The sceptic sees nothing in miracles but ground of offence. To me they seem to involve in their very nature a truth so great, so vital, that I am not only reconciled to them, but am disposed to receive joyfully any sufficient proofs of their having been performed. To the sceptic, no principle is so important as the uniformity of nature, the constancy of its laws. To me there is a vastly higher truth, to which miracles bear witness, and to which I welcome their aid. What I wish chiefly to know is, that Mind is the supreme power in the universe; that matter is its instrument and slave; that there is a Will to which nature can offer no obstruction; that God is unshackled by the laws of the universe, and controls them at his pleasure. This ab-

solute sovereignity of the Divine Mind over the universe, is the only foundation of hope for the triumph of the human mind over matter, over physical influences, over imperfection and death. Now it is plain, that the strong impressions which we receive through the senses from the material creation, joined to our experience of its regularity, and to our instinctive trust in its future uniformity, do obscure this supremacy of God, do tempt us to ascribe a kind of omnipotence to nature's laws, and to limit our hopes to the good which is promised by these. There is a strong tendency in men to attach the idea of necessity to an unchanging regularity of operation, and to imagine bounds to a being, who keeps one undeviating path, or who repeats himself perpetually. Hence, I say, that I rejoice in miracles. They show and assert the supremacy of Mind in the universe. They manifest a spiritual power, which is in no degree enthralled by the laws of matter. I rejoice in these witnesses to so great a truth. I rejoice in whatever proves, that this order of nature, which so often weighs on me as a chain, and which contains no promise of my perfection, is not supreme and immutable, and that the Creator is not restricted to the narrow modes of operation with which I am most familiar.

Perhaps the form in which the objection to miracles is most frequently expressed, is the following:—"It is derogatory," says the sceptic, "to the perfect wisdom of God to suppose him to break in upon the order of his own works. It is only the unskilful artist who is obliged to thrust his hand into the machine for the purpose of supplying its defects, and of giving it a new impulse by an immediate agency." To this objection I reply, that it proceeds on false ideas of God and of the creation. God is not an artist, but a Moral Parent and Governor; nor is the creation a machine. If it were, it might be urged with greater speciousness that miracles cannot be needed or required. One of the most striking views of the creation is the contrast or opposition of the elements of which it consists. It includes not only matter but mind, not only lifeless and unconscious masses, but rational beings, free agents; and these are its noblest parts

and ultimate objects. The material universe was framed not for itself, but for these. Its order was not appointed for its own sake, but to instruct and improve a higher rank of beings, the intelligent offspring of God; and whenever a departure from this order, that is, whenever miraculous agency can contribute to the growth and perfection of his intelligent creatures, it is demanded by his wisdom, goodness, and all his attributes. If the Supreme Being proposed only such ends as mechanism can produce, then he might have framed a machinery so perfect and sure as to need no suspension of its ordinary movements. But he has an incomparably nobler end. His great purpose is to educate, to rescue from evil, to carry forward for ever the free, rational mind or soul; and who that understands what a free mind is, and what a variety of teaching and discipline it requires, will presume to affirm, that no lights or aids, but such as come to it through an invariable order of nature, are necessary to unfold it?

Much of the difficulty in regard to miracles, as I apprehend, would be removed, if we were to consider more particularly, that the chief distinction of intelligent beings is Moral Freedom, the power of determining themselves to evil as well as good, and consequently the power of involving themselves in great misery. When God made man, he framed not a machine, but a free being, who was to rise or fall according to his use or abuse of his powers. This capacity, at once the most glorious and the most fearful which we can conceive, shows us how the human race may have come into a condition, to which the illumination of nature was inadequate. In truth, the more we consider the freedom of intelligent beings, the more we shall question the possibility of establishing an unchangeable order which will meet fully all their wants; for such beings, having of necessity a wide range of action, may bring themselves into a vast variety of conditions, and of course may come to need a relief not contained in the resources of nature. The history of the human race illustrates these truths. At the introduction of Christianity, the human family were plunged into gross and debasing error, and the

light of nature had not served for ages to gu
back to truth. Philosophy had done its best a
A new element, a new power seems to have b
ing to the progress of the race. That in su
gence miraculous aid should be imparted, acc
our best views of God. I repeat it; were men m
beings, an undeviating order of nature might
their wants. They are free beings, who bear
relation to God, and as such may need, and a
of, a more various and special care than is exte
the irrational creation.

When I examine nature, I see reasons for
that it was not intended by God to be the onl
of instructing and improving mankind. I see r
I think, why its order or regular course should
sionally suspended, and why revelation should
to it in the work of carrying forward the rac
offer only a few considerations on this point,
seem to me worthy of serious attention. Th
that a fixed, invariable order of nature does n
some views of God which are of great interest
portance, or at least it does not give them
distinctness which we all desire. It reveals hi
Universal Sovereign who provides for the wh
the general weal, but not, with sufficient clear
tender Father interested in the individual. I se
fixed order, his care of the race, but not his
boundless concern for myself. Nature spe
general Divinity, not of the friend and bene
each living soul. This is a necessary defect
an inflexible, unvarying administration by gene
and it seems to require that God, to carry for
race, should reveal himself by some other ma
by general laws. No conviction is more imp
human improvement than that of God's paterna
in every human being; and how can he com
this persuasion so effectually, as by suspending
order, to teach, through an inspired messe
paternal love?

My second remark is, that whilst nature teac
important lessons, it is not a direct, urgent teac

ruths are not prominent, and consequently men may neglect it, and place themselves beyond its influence. For example, nature holds out the doctrine of One God, but does not compel attention to it. God's name is not written in the sky in letters of light, which all nations must read, nor sounded abroad in a voice, deep and awful as thunders, so that all must hear. Nature is a gentle, I had almost said, a reserved teacher, demanding patient thought in the learner, and may therefore be unheeded. Men may easily shut their ears and harden their hearts against its testimony to God. Accordingly we learn, that, at Christ's coming, almost all nations had lost the knowledge of the true glory of the Creator, and given themselves up to gross superstitions. To such a condition of the world, nature's indirect and unimposing mode of instruction is not fitted, and thus it furnishes a reason for a more immediate and impressive teaching. In such a season of moral darkness, was it not worthy of God to kindle another and more quickening beam? When the long repeated and almost monotonous language of creation was not heard, was it unworthy of God to speak with a new and more startling voice? What better method was there for rousing those whom nature's quiet regularity could not teach, than to interrupt its usual course?

I proceed to another reason for expecting revelation to be added to the light of nature. Nature, I have said, is not a direct or urgent teacher, and men may place themselves beyond its voice. I say, thirdly, that there is one great point, on which we are deeply concerned to know the truth, and which is yet taught so indistinctly by nature, that men, however disposed to learn, cannot by that light alone obtain full conviction. What, let me ask, is the question in which each man has the deepest interest? It is this, Are we to live again; or is this life all? Does the principle of thought perish with the body; or does it survive? And if it survive, where? how? in what condition? under what law? There is an inward voice which speaks of judgment to come. Will judgment indeed come? and if so, what award may we hope or fear? The future state of man, this is the

great question forced on us by our changing life and by approaching death. I will not say, that on this topic nature throws no light. I think it does; and this light continually grows brighter to them whose eyes revelation has couched and made strong to see. But nature alone does not meet our wants. I might prove this by referring you to the ages preceding Christ, when the anxious spirit of man constantly sought to penetrate the gloom beyond the grave, when imagination and philosophy alike plunged into the future, but found no resting-place. But every man must feel, that, left to nature as his only guide, he must wander in doubt, as to the life to come. Where, but from God himself, can I learn my destination? I ask at the mouth of the tomb for intelligence of the departed, and the tomb gives me no reply. I examine the various regions of nature, but I can discover no process for restoring the mouldering body, and no sign or track of the spirit's ascent to another sphere. I see the need of a power above nature to restore or perpetuate life after death; and if God intended to give assurance of this life, I see not how he can do it but by supernatural teaching, by a miraculous revelation. Miracles are the appropriate, and would seem to be the only mode of placing beyond doubt man's future and immortal being; and no miracles can be conceived so peculiarly adapted to this end as the very ones which hold the highest place in Christianity,—I mean the resurrection of Lazarus, and, still more, the resurrection of Jesus. No man will deny, that, of all truths, a future state is most strengthening to virtue and consoling to humanity. Is it then unworthy of God to employ miracles for the awakening or the confirmation of this hope? May they not even be expected, if nature, as we have seen, sheds but a faint light on this most interesting of all verities?

I add one more consideration in support of the position, that nature was not intended to be God's only method of teaching mankind. In surveying the human mind, we discover a principle which singularly fits it to be wrought upon and benefited by miraculous agency, and which might therefore lead us to expect such interposition. I refer to that principle of our nature, by

which we become in a measure insensible or indifferent to what is familiar, but are roused to attention and deep interest by what is singular, strange, supernatural. This principle of wonder is an important part of our constitution; and that God should employ it in the work of our education, is what reason might anticipate. I see, then, a foundation for miracles in the human mind; and when I consider that the mind is God's noblest work, I ought to look to this as the interpreter of his designs. We are plainly so constituted, that the order of nature, the more it is fixed, excites us the less. Our interest is blunted by its ceaseless uniformity. On the contrary, departures from this order powerfully stir the soul, break up its old and slumbering habits of thought, turn it with a new solicitude to the Almighty Interposer, and prepare it to receive with awe the communications of his will. Was it unworthy of God who gave us this sensibility to the wonderful, to appeal to it for the recovery of his creatures to himself?

I here close my remarks on the great objection of scepticism, that miracles are inconsistent with the divine perfections; that the Supreme Being, having established an order of operation, cannot be expected to depart from it. To me, such reasoning, if reasoning it may be called, is of no weight. When I consider God's paternal and moral relation to mankind, and his interest in their progress; when I consider how accordant it is with his character that he should make himself known to them by methods most fitted to awaken the mind and heart to his goodness; when I consider the need we have of illumination in regard to the future life more distinct and full than the creation affords; when I consider the constitution and condition of man, his free agency, and the corruption into which he had fallen; when I consider how little benefit a being so depraved was likely to derive from an order of nature to which he had grown familiar, and how plainly the mind is fitted to be quickened by miraculous interposition;—I say, when I take all these things into view, I see, as I think, a foundation in nature for supernatural light and aid, and I discern in a miraculous revelation, such as Chris-

tianity, a provision suited at once to the frame and wants of the human soul, and to the perfections of its Author.

There are other objections to miracles, though less avowed, than that which I have now considered, yet perhaps not less influential, and probably operating on many minds so secretly as to be unperceived. At two of these I will just glance. Not a few, I am confident, have doubts of the Christian miracles, because they see none *now*. Were their scepticism to clothe itself in language it would say, "Show us miracles, and we will believe them. We suspect them, because they are confined to the past." Now this objection is a childish one. It may be resolved into the principle, that nothing in the past is worthy of belief, which is not repeated in the present. Admit this, and where will incredulity stop? How many forms and institutions of society, recorded in ancient history, have passed away. Has history then no title to respect? If indeed the human race were standing still, if one age were merely a copy of preceding ones, if each had precisely the same wants, then the miracles required at one period would be reproduced in all. But who does not know that there is a progress in human affairs; that formerly mankind were in a different stage from that through which they are now passing; that of course the education of the race must be varied; and that miracles, important once, may be superfluous now? Shall we bind the Creator to invariable modes of teaching and training a race whose capacities and wants are undergoing a perpetual change? Because in periods of thick darkness, God introduced a new religion by supernatural works, shall we expect these works to be repeated, when the darkness is scattered and their end attained? Who does not see that miracles, from their very nature, must be rare, occasional, limited? Would not their power be impaired by frequency? and would it not wholly cease, were they so far multiplied as to seem a part of the order of nature?

The objection I am now considering shows us the true character of scepticism. Scepticism is essentially a narrowness of mind, which makes the present moment

the measure of the past and future. It is the creature of sense. In the midst of a boundless universe, it can conceive no mode of operation but what falls under its immediate observation. The visible, the present is every thing to the unbeliever. Let him but enlarge his views; let him look round on the immensity of the universe; let him consider the infinity of resources which are comprehended in omnipotence; let him represent to himself the manifold stages through which the human race is appointed to pass; let him remember that the education of the ever-growing mind must require a great variety of discipline; and especially let him admit the sublime thought, of which the germ is found in nature, that man was created to be trained for, and to ascend to an incomparably higher order of existence than the present —and he will see the childishness of making his narrow experience the standard of all that is past and is to come in human history.

It is strange indeed, that men of science should fall into this error. The improved science of the present day teaches them, that this globe of ours, which seems so unchangeable, is not now what it was a few thousand years ago. They find proofs by digging into the earth, that this globe was inhabited, before the existence of the human race, by classes of animals which have perished, and the ocean peopled by races now unknown, and that the human race are occupying a ruined and restored world. Men of science should learn to free themselves from the vulgar narrowness which sees nothing in the past but the present, and should learn the stupendous and infinite variety of the dispensations of God.

There is another objection to miracles, and the last to be now considered, which is drawn from the well-known fact, that pretended miracles crowd the pages of ancient history. No falsehoods, we are told, have been more common than accounts of prodigies, and therefore the miraculous character of Christianity is a presumption against its truth. I acknowledge that this argument has its weight; and I am ready to say, that, did I know nothing of Christianity, but that it was a religion full

of miracles; did I know nothing of its doctrines, its purposes, its influences, and whole history, I should suspect it as much as the unbeliever. There is a strong presumption against miracles, considered nakedly, or separated from their design and from all circumstances which explain and support them. There is a like presumption against events not miraculous, but of an extraordinary character. But this is only a reason for severe scrutiny and slow belief, not for resisting strong and multiplied proofs. I blame no man for doubting a report of miracles when first brought to his ears. Thousands of absurd prodigies have been created by ignorance and fanaticism, and thousands more have been forged by imposture. I invite you, then, to try scrupulously the miracles of Christianity; and if they bear the marks of the superstitious legends of false religions, do not spare them. I only ask for them a fair hearing and calm investigation.

It is plainly no sufficient argument for rejecting all miracles, that men have believed in many which are false. If you go back to the times when miraculous stories were swallowed most greedily, and read the books then written on history, geography, and natural science, you will find all of them crowded with error; but do they therefore contain nothing worthy your trust? Is there not a vein of truth running through the prevalent falsehood? And cannot a sagacious mind very often detach the real from the fictitious, explain the origin of many mistakes, distinguish the judicious and honest from the credulous or interested narrator, and by a comparison of testimonies detect the latent truth? Where will you stop, if you start with believing nothing on points where former ages have gone astray? You must pronounce all religion and all morality to be delusion, for on both topics men have grossly erred. Nothing is more unworthy of a philosopher, than to found a universal censure on a limited number of unfavourable facts. This is much like the reasoning of the misanthrope, who, because he sees much vice, infers that there is no virtue, and, because he has sometimes been deceived, pronounces all men hypocrites.

I maintain that the multiplicity of false miracles, far from disproving, gives support to those on which Christianity rests; for, first, there is generally some foundation for falsehood, especially when it obtains general belief. The love of truth is an essential principle of human nature; men generally embrace error on account of some precious ingredient of truth mixed with it, and for the time inseparable from it. The universal belief of past ages in miraculous interpositions, is to me a presumption that miracles have entered into human history. Will the unbeliever say, that it only shows the insatiable thirst of the human mind for the supernatural? I reply, that, in this reasoning, he furnishes a weapon against himself; for a strong principle in the human mind, impelling men to seek for and to cling to miraculous agency, affords a presumption that the Author of our being, by whom this thirst for the supernatural was given, intended to furnish objects for it, and to assign it a place in the education of the race.

But I observe, in the next place, and it is an observation of great importance, that the exploded miracles of ancient times, if carefully examined, not only furnish a general presumption in favour of the existence of genuine ones, but yield strong proof of the truth of those in particular upon which Christianity rests. I say to the sceptic, You affirm nothing but truth in declaring history to abound in false miracles; I agree with you in exploding by far the greater part of the supernatural accounts of which ancient religions boast. But how do we know these to be false? We do not so judge without proofs. We discern in them the marks of delusion. Now I ask you to examine these marks, and then to answer me honestly, whether you find them in the miracles of Christianity. Is there not a broad line between Christ's works and those which we both agree in rejecting? I maintain that there is, and that nothing but ignorance can confound the Christian miracles with the prodigies of heathenism. The contrast between them is so strong as to forbid us to refer them to a common origin. The miracles of superstition carry the brand of falsehood in their own nature, and are disproved by the circum-

stances under which they were imposed on the multitude. The objects, for which they are said to have been wrought, are such as do not require or justify a divine interposition. Many of them are absurd, childish, or extravagant, and betray a weak intellect or diseased imagination. Many can be explained by natural causes. Many are attested by persons who lived in different countries and ages, and enjoyed no opportunities of inquiring into their truth. We can see the origin of many in the self-interest of those who forged them, and can account for their reception by the condition of the world. In other words, these spurious miracles were the natural growth of the ignorance, passions, prejudices, and corruptions of the times, and tended to confirm them. Now it is not enough to say, that these various marks of falsehood cannot be found in the Christian miracles. We find in them characters directly the reverse. They were wrought for an end worthy of God; they were wrought in an age of improvement; they are marked by a majesty, beneficence, unostentatious simplicity and wisdom, which separate them immeasurably from the dreams of a disordered fancy or the contrivances of imposture. They can be explained by no interests, passions, or prejudices of men. They are parts of a religion, which was singularly at variance with established ideas and expectations, which breathes purity and benevolence, which transcended the improvements of the age, and which thus carries with it the presumption of a divine original. Whence this immense distance between the two classes of miracles? Will you trace both to one source, and that a polluted one? Will you ascribe to one spirit, works as different as light and darkness, as earth and heaven? I am not then shaken in my faith by the false miracles of other religions. I have no desire to keep them out of sight. I summon them as my witnesses. They show me how naturally imposture and superstition leave the stamp of themselves on their fictions. They show how man, when he aspires to counterfeit God's agency, betrays more signally his impotence and folly. When I place side by side the mighty works of Jesus and the prodigies of heathenism, I see that they

can no more be compared with one another, than the machinery and mock thunders of the theatre can be likened to the awful and beneficent powers of the universe.

In the preceding remarks on miracles, I have aimed chiefly to meet those general objections by which many are prejudiced against supernatural interpositions universally, and are disinclined to weigh any proof in their support. Hoping that this weak scepticism has been shown to want foundation in nature and reason, I proceed now to state more particularly the principal grounds on which I believe that the miracles ascribed to Jesus and the first propagators of Christianity, were actually wrought in attestation of its truth.

The evidences of facts are of two kinds, presumptive and direct, and both meet in support of Christian miracles. First, there are strong presumptions in its favour. To this class of proofs, belong the views already given of the accordance of revelation and miracles with the wants and principles of human nature, with the perfections of God, with his relations to his human family, and with his ordinary providence. These I need not repeat. I will only observe that a strong presumption in support of the miracles arises from the importance of the religion to which they belong. If I were told of supernatural works, performed to prove that three are more than one, or that human life requires food for its support, I should know that they were false. The presumption against them would be invincible. The Author of nature could never supersede its wise and stupendous order to teach what falls within the knowledge of every child. Extraordinary interpositions of God suppose that truths of extraordinary dignity and beneficence are to be imparted. Now, in Christianity I find truths of transcendent importance, which throw into shade all the discoveries of science, and which give a new character, aim, and interest to our existence. Here is a fit occasion for supernatural interposition. A presumption exists in favour of miracles, by which a religion so worthy of God is sustained.

But a presumption in favour of facts, is not enough. It indeed adds much force to the direct proofs; still these

are needed, nor are they wanting to Christianity. The direct proofs of facts are chiefly of two kinds; they consist of testimony, oral or written, and of effects, traces, monuments, which the facts have left behind them. The Christian miracles are supported by both. We have first the most unexceptionable testimony, nothing less than that of contemporaries and eye-witnesses, of the companions of Jesus and the first propagators of his religion. We have the testimony of men who could not have been deceived as to the facts which they report; who bore their witness amidst perils and persecutions; who bore it on the very spot where their Master lived and died; who had nothing to gain, and every thing to lose, if their testimony were false; whose writings breathe the sincerest love of virtue and of mankind; and who at last sealed their attestations with their blood. More unexceptionable witnesses to facts cannot be produced or conceived.

Do you say, "These witnesses lived ages ago; could we hear these accounts from their own lips, we should be satisfied?" I answer, You have something better than their own lips, or than their own word taken alone. You have, as has been proved, their writings. Perhaps you hear with some surprise that a book may be a better witness than its author; but nothing is more true, and I will illustrate it by an imaginary case in our own times.

Suppose, then, that a man claiming to be an eye-witness, should relate to me the events of the three memorable days of July, in which the last revolution of France was achieved; suppose next, that a book, a history of that revolution, published and received as true in France, should be sent to me from that country. Which is the best evidence of the facts? I say the last. A single witness may deceive; but that a writer should publish in France the history of a revolution which never occurred there, or which differed essentially from the true one, is in the highest degree improbable; and that such a history should obtain currency, that it should not be instantly branded as a lie, is utterly impossible. A history received by a people as true, not only gives us the testimony of the writer, but the testimony of the nation among whom it obtains credit. It is a concen-

tration of thousands of voices, of many thousand witnesses. I say, then, that the writings of the first teachers of Christianity, received as they were by the multitude of Christians in their own times and in those which immediately followed, are the testimonies of that multitude as well as of the writers. Thousands nearest to the events join in bearing testimony to the Christian miracles.

But there is another class of evidence, sometimes more powerful than direct witnesses, and this belongs to Christianity. Facts are often placed beyond doubt by the effects which they leave behind them. This is the case with the miracles of Christ. Let me explain this branch of evidence. I am told, when absent and distant from your city, that on a certain day, a tide, such as had never been known, rose in your harbour, overflowed your wharfs, and rushed into your streets; I doubt the fact; but hastening here, I see what were once streets, strewed with sea-weed, and shells, and the ruins of houses, and I cease to doubt. A witness may deceive, but such effects cannot lie. All great events leave effects, and these speak directly of the cause. What, I ask, are the proofs of the American revolution? Have we none but written or oral testimony? Our free constitution, the whole form of our society, the language and spirit of our laws, all these bear witness to our English origin, and to our successful conflict for independence. Now the miracles of Christianity have left effects, which equally attest their reality, and cannot be explained without them. I go back to the age of Jesus Christ, and I am immediately struck with the commencement and rapid progress of the most remarkable revolution in the annals of the world. I see a new religion, of a character altogether its own, which bore no likeness to any past or existing faith, spreading in a few years through all civilised nations, and introducing a new era, a new state of society, a change of the human mind, which has broadly distinguished all following ages. Here is a plain fact, which the sceptic will not deny, however he may explain it. I see this religion issuing from an obscure, despised, hated people. Its Founder had died on the cross, a mode of punishment as dis-

graceful as the pillory or gallows of the present day. Its teachers were poor men, without rank, office, or education, taken from the fishing-boat and other occupations which had never furnished teachers to mankind. I see these men beginning their work on the spot where their Master's blood had been shed, as of a common malefactor; and I hear them summoning first his murderers, and then all nations and all ranks, the sovereign on the throne, the priest in the temple, the great and the learned, as well as the poor and the ignorant, to renounce the faith and the worship which had been hallowed by the veneration of all ages, and to take the yoke of their crucified Lord. I see passion and prejudice, the sword of the magistrate, the curse of the priest, the scorn of the philosopher, and the fury of the populace joined to crush this common enemy; and yet, without a human weapon and in opposition to all human power, I see the humble Apostles of Jesus winning their way, overpowering prejudice, breaking the ranks of their opposers, changing enemies into friends, breathing into multitudes a calm spirit of martyrdom, and carrying to the bounds of civilisation, and even into half-civilised regions, a religion which has contributed to advance society more than all other causes combined. Here is the effect. Here is a monument more durable than pillars or triumphal arches. Now I ask for an explanation of these effects? If Jesus Christ and his Apostles were indeed sent and empowered by God, and wrought miracles in attestation of their mission, then the establishment of Christianity is explained. Suppose them, on the other hand, to have been insane enthusiasts, or selfish impostors, left to meet the whole strength of human opposition, with nothing but their own power or rather their own weakness, and you have no cause for the stupendous effect I have described. Such men could no more have changed the face of the world, than they could have turned back rivers to their sources, sunk mountains into valleys, or raised valleys to the skies. Christianity, then, has not only the evidence of unexceptionable witnesses, but that of effects; a proof which will grow stronger by comparing its progress with that of other religions, such as Mahometanism,

which sprung from human passions, and were advanced by human power.

IV. Having given my views on the subject of Christian miracles, I now pass to the last topic of this discourse. Its extent and importance will lead me to enlarge upon it in a subsequent discourse; but a discussion of Christian evidences, in which it should find no place, would be essentially defective. I refer to the proof of Christianity derived from the character of its Author.

The character of Jesus was original. He formed a new era in the moral history of the human race. His perfection was not that of his age, nor a copy of the greatness which had long engrossed the world's admiration. Jesus stood apart from other men. He borrowed from none, and depended on none. Surrounded by men of low thoughts, he rose to the conception of a higher form of human virtue than had yet been realised or imagined, and deliberately devoted himself to its promotion, as the supreme object of his life and death. Conscious of being dedicated to this great work, he spoke with a calm dignity, an unaffected elevation, which separated him from all other teachers. Unsupported, he never wavered; sufficient to himself, he refused alliance with wealth or power. Yet, with all this self-subsistence and uncompromising energy, his character was the mildest, the gentlest, the most attractive ever manifested among men. It could not have been a fiction, for who could have conceived it, or who could have embodied the conception in such a life as Jesus is said to have led, in actions, words, manners so natural and unstudied, so imbued with reality, so worthy of the Son of God?

The great distinction of Jesus, was a philanthropy without mixture and without bounds; a philanthropy, uniting grandeur and meekness in beautiful proportions; a philanthropy, as wise as it was fervent, which comprehended the true wants and the true good of man, which compassionated indeed his sufferings from abroad, but which saw in the soul the deep fountain of his miseries, and laboured, by regenerating this, to bring him to a pure and enduring happiness. So peculiar, so unparalleled was the benevolence of Jesus, that it has

impressed itself on all future times. There w
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operates even now. Since the death of Christ,
of humanity, unknown before, has silently diffus
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society, which has done more than all other
combined, to disarm the selfish passions, and
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argues an excess of credulity, and a strange ignorance of the powers and principles of human nature. The character of Jesus was real; and if so, Jesus must have been what he professed to be, the Son of God and the revealer of his mercy and will to mankind.

I have now completed what I proposed in this discourse. I have laid before you some of the principal evidences of Christianity. I have aimed to state them without exaggeration. That an honest mind, which thoroughly comprehends them, can deny their force, seems to me hardly possible. Stronger proofs may indeed be conceived; but it is doubtful, whether these could be given in consistency with our moral nature, and with the moral government of God. Such a government requires, that truth should not be forced on the mind, but that we should be left to gain it, by an upright use of our understandings, and by conforming ourselves to what we have already learned. God might indeed shed on us an overpowering light, so that it would be impossible for us to lose our way; but in so doing, he would annihilate an important part of our present probation. It is then no objection to Christianity, that its evidences are not the very strongest which might be given, and that they do not extort universal assent. In this respect it accords with other great truths. These are not forced on our belief. Whoever will, may shut his eyes on their proofs, and array against them objections. In the measure of evidence with which Christianity is accompanied, I see a just respect for the freedom of the mind, and a wise adaptation to that moral nature, which it is the great aim of this religion to carry forward to perfection.

I close as I began. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is true. It is true; and its truth is to break forth more and more gloriously. Of this I have not a doubt. I know indeed that our religion has been questioned even by intelligent and good men; but this does not shake my faith in its divine original or in its ultimate triumphs. Such men have questioned it, because they have known it chiefly by its corruptions. In proportion as its original simplicity shall be restored,

the doubts of the well-disposed will yield. I have no fears from infidelity; especially from that form of it, which some are at this moment labouring to spread through our country; I mean, that insane, desperate unbelief, which strives to quench the light of nature as well as of revelation, and to leave us, not only without Christ, but without God. This I dread no more, than I should fear the efforts of men to pluck the sun from his sphere, or to storm the skies with the artillery of the earth. We were made for religion; and unless the enemies of our faith can change our nature, they will leave the foundation of religion unshaken. The human soul was created to look above material nature. It wants a Deity for its love and trust, an Immortality for its hope. It wants consolations not found in philosophy, wants strength in temptation, sorrow, and death, which human wisdom cannot minister; and knowing, as I do, that Christianity meets these deep wants of men, I have no fear or doubt as to its triumphs. Men cannot long live without religion. In France there is a spreading dissatisfaction with the sceptical spirit of the past generation. A philosopher in that country would now blush to quote Voltaire as an authority in religion. Already Atheism is dumb where once it seemed to bear sway. The greatest minds in France are working back their way to the light of truth. Many of them indeed cannot yet be called Christians; but their path, like that of the wise men of old who came star-guided from the East, is towards Christ. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It has an immortal life, and will gather strength from the violence of its foes. It is equal to all the wants of men. The greatest minds have found in it the light which they most anxiously desired. The most sorrowful and broken spirits have found in it a healing balm for their woes. It has inspired the sublimest virtues and the loftiest hopes. For the corruptions of such a religion I weep, and I should blush to be their advocate; but of the Gospel itself I can never be ashamed.

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

Matthew xvii. 5.—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

THE character of Christ may be studied for various purposes. It is singularly fitted to call forth the heart, to awaken love, admiration, and moral delight. As an example, it has no rival. As an evidence of his religion, perhaps it yields to no other proof; perhaps no other has so often conquered unbelief. It is chiefly to this last view of it that I now ask your attention. The character of Christ is a strong confirmation of the truth of his religion. As such, I would now place it before you. I shall not, however, think only of confirming your faith; the very illustrations, which I shall adduce for this purpose, will show the claims of Jesus to our reverence, obedience, imitation, and fervent love.

The more we contemplate Christ's character, as exhibited in the Gospel, the more we shall be impressed with its genuineness and reality. It was plainly drawn from the life. The narratives of the Evangelists bear the marks of truth, perhaps beyond all other histories. They set before us the most extraordinary being who ever appeared on earth, and yet they are as artless as the stories of childhood. The authors do not think of themselves. They have plainly but one aim, to show us their Master; and they manifest the deep veneration which he inspired, by leaving him to reveal himself, by giving us his actions and sayings without comment, explanation, or eulogy. You see in these narratives no varnishing, no high colouring, no attempts to make his

actions striking, or to bring out the beauties of his character. We are never pointed to any circumstance as illustrative of his greatness. The Evangelists write with a calm trust in his character, with a feeling that it needed no aid from their hands, and with a deep veneration, as if comment or praise of their own were not worthy to mingle with the recital of such a life.

It is the effect of our familiarity with the history of Jesus, that we are not struck by it, as we ought to be. We read it before we are capable of understanding its excellence. His stupendous works become as familiar to us as the events of ordinary life, and his high offices seem as much matters of course, as the common relations which men bear to each other. On this account, it is fit for the ministers of religion to do what the Evangelists did not attempt, to offer comments on Christ's character, to bring out its features, to point men to its higher beauties, to awaken their awe by unfolding its wonderful majesty. Indeed, one of our most important functions, as teachers, is to give freshness and vividness to truths which have become worn, I had almost said tarnished by long and familiar handling. We have to fight with the power of habit. Through habit, men look on this glorious creation with insensibility, and are less moved by the all-enlightening sun than by a show of fire-works. It is the duty of a moral and religious teacher, almost to create a new sense in men, that they may learn in what a world of beauty and magnificence they live. And so in regard to Christ's character; men become used to it, until they imagine, that there is something more admirable in a great man of their own day, a statesman or a conqueror, than in Him, the latchet of whose shoes statesmen and conquerors are not worthy to unloose.

In this discourse, I wish to show that the character of Christ, taken as a whole, is one which could not have entered the thoughts of man, could not have been imagined or feigned; that it bears every mark of genuineness and truth; that it ought therefore to be acknowledged as real and of divine original.

It is all-important, my friends, if we would feel the force of this argument, to transport ourselves to the

times when Jesus lived. We are very apt to think, that he was moving about in such a city as this, or among a people agreeing with ourselves in modes of thinking and habits of life. But the truth is, he lived in a state of society singularly remote from our own. Of all nations, the Jewish was the most strongly marked. The Jew hardly felt himself to belong to the human family. He was accustomed to speak of himself as chosen by God, holy, clean; whilst the Gentiles were sinners, dogs, polluted, unclean. His common dress, the phylactery on his brow or arm, the hem of his garment, his food, the ordinary circumstances of his life, as well as his temple, his sacrifices, his ablutions, all held him up to himself as a peculiar favourite of God, and all separated him from the rest of the world. With other nations he could not eat or marry. They were unworthy of his communion. Still, with all these notions of superiority, he saw himself conquered by those whom he despised. He was obliged to wear the shackles of Rome, to see Roman legions in his territory, a Roman guard near his temple, and a Roman tax-gatherer extorting, for the support of an idolatrous government and an idolatrous worship, what he regarded as due only to God. The hatred which burned in the breast of the Jew towards his foreign oppressor, perhaps never glowed with equal intenseness in any other conquered state. He had, however, his secret consolation. The time was near, the prophetic age was at hand, when Judea was to break her chains and rise from the dust. Her long-promised King and Deliverer was near, and was coming to wear the crown of universal empire. From Jerusalem was to go forth his law, and all nations were to serve the chosen people of God. To this conqueror the Jews indeed ascribed the office of promoting religion; but the religion of Moses, corrupted into an outward service, was to them the perfection of human nature. They clung to its forms with the whole energy of their souls. To the Mosaic institution, they ascribed their distinction from all other nations. It lay at the foundation of their hopes of dominion. I believe no strength of prejudice ever equalled the intense attachment of the Jew to his

peculiar national religion. You may judge of its power by the fact of its having been transmitted through so many ages, amidst persecutions and sufferings which would have subdued any spirit but that of a Jew. You must bring these things to your mind. You must place yourselves in the midst of this singular people.

Among this singular people, burning with impatient expectation, appeared Jesus of Nazareth. His first words were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These words we hear with little emotion; but to the Jews, who had been watching for this kingdom for ages, and who were looking for its immediate manifestation, they must have been awakening as an earthquake. Accordingly we find Jesus thronged by multitudes which no building could contain. He repairs to a mountain, as affording him advantages for addressing the crowd. I see them surrounding him with eager looks, and ready to drink in every word from his lips. And what do I hear? Not one word of Judea, of Rome, of freedom, of conquest, of the glories of God's chosen people, and of the thronging of all nations to the temple on Mount Zion. Almost every word was a death-blow to the hopes and feelings which glowed through the whole people, and were consecrated under the name of religion. He speaks of the long-expected Kingdom of Heaven; but speaks of it as a felicity promised to, and only to be partaken by the humble and pure in heart. The righteousness of the Pharisees, that which was deemed the perfection of religion, and which the new deliverer was expected to spread far and wide, he pronounces worthless, and declares the kingdom of Heaven, or of the Messiah, to be shut against all who do not cultivate a new, spiritual, and disinterested virtue. Instead of war and victory, he commands his impatient hearers to love, to forgive, to bless their enemies; and holds forth this spirit of benignity, mercy, peace, as the special badge of the people of the true Messiah. Instead of national interests and glories, he commands them to seek first a spirit of impartial charity and love, unconfined by the bounds of tribe or nation, and proclaims this to be the happiness and honour of the reign

for which they hoped. Instead of this world's riches which they expected to flow from all lands into their own, he commands them to lay up treasures in heaven, and directs them to an incorruptible, immortal life, as the true end of their being. Nor is this all. He does not merely offer himself as a spiritual deliverer, as the founder of a new empire of inward piety and universal charity; he closes with language announcing a more mysterious office. "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Here I meet the annunciation of a character as august as it must have been startling. I hear him foretelling a dominion to be exercised in the future world. He begins to announce, what entered largely into his future teaching, that his power was not bounded to this earth. These words I better understand, when I hear him subsequently declaring, that, after a painful death, he was to rise again and ascend to heaven, and there, in a state of pre-eminent power and glory, was to be the advocate and judge of the human race.

Such are some of the views, given by Jesus, of his character and reign, in the Sermon on the Mount. Immediately afterwards, I hear another lesson from him, bringing out some of these truths still more strongly. A Roman centurion makes application to him for the cure of a servant, whom he particularly valued; and on expressing, in a strong manner, his conviction of the power of Jesus to heal at a distance, Jesus, according to his historians, "marvelled, and said to those that followed, Verily I say unto you I have not found so great faith in Israel; and I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom (that is, the Jews) shall be cast out." Here all the hopes which the Jews had cherished of an exclusive or peculiar possession of the Messiah's kingdom, were crushed; and the reception of the despised Gentile world to all

his blessings, or, in other words, the exte
pure religion to the ends of the earth, bega
claimed.

Here I pause for the present, and I ask y
the character of Jesus be not the most extra
history, and wholly inexplicable on human
Review the ground over which we have go
lect that he was born and grew up a Jew, i
of Jews, a people burning with one passion,
ing their whole souls into the expectation of
and earthly deliverer. He grew up amor
poverty, seclusion, and labours fitted to c
thoughts, purposes, and hopes; and yet w
escaping every influence of education and so
find him as untouched by the feelings whic
universally around him, which religion and
concurred to consecrate, which the mothe
into the ear of the child, and which the
the synagogue strengthened in the adult, a
been brought up in another world. We fin
ceiving a sublime purpose, such as had nev
on sage or hero, and see him possessed with a
ness of sustaining a relation to God and ma
of being invested with powers in this worl
world to come, such as had never entered t
mind. Whence now, I ask, came the concep
character?

Will any say it had its origin in impostu
was a fabrication of a deceiver? I answer,
acter claimed by Christ excludes this supp
its very nature. It was so remote from all
and anticipations of the times, so unfit to aw
pathy, so unattractive to the heathen, so ex
to the Jew, that it was the last to enter the i
impostor. A deceiver of the dullest vision
foreseen, that it would expose him to bitter
horrence, and persecution, and that he would
carry on his work alone, just as Jesus alw
alone, and could not find an individual to ent
spirit and design. What allurements an un
self-seeking man could find to such an ent
common ingenuity can discover.

I affirm next, that the sublimity of the character claimed by Christ forbids us to trace it to imposture. That a selfish, designing, depraved mind, could have formed the idea and purpose of a work unparalleled in beneficence, in vastness, and in moral grandeur, would certainly be a strange departure from the laws of the human mind. I add, that if an impostor could have lighted on the conception of so sublime and wonderful a work as that claimed by Jesus, he could not, I say he *could* not have thrown into his personation of it the air of truth and reality. The part would have been too high for him. He would have overacted it or fallen short of it perpetually. His true character would have rebelled against his assumed one. We should have seen something strained, forced, artificial, awkward, showing that he was not in his true sphere. To act up to a character so singular and grand, and one for which no precedent could be found, seems to me utterly impossible for a man who had not the true spirit of it, or who was only wearing it as a mask.

Now how stands the case with Jesus? Bred a Jewish peasant or carpenter, he issues from obscurity, and claims for himself a divine office, a superhuman dignity, such as had not been imagined; and in no instance does he fall below the character. The peasant, and still more the Jew, wholly disappears. We feel that a new being, of a new order of mind, is taking a part in human affairs. There is a native tone of grandeur and authority in his teaching. He speaks as a being related to the whole human race. His mind never shrinks within the ordinary limits of human agency. A narrower sphere than the world never enters his thoughts. He speaks in a natural, spontaneous style, of accomplishing the most arduous and important change in human affairs. This unlaboured manner of expressing great thoughts, is particularly worthy of attention. You never hear from Jesus that swelling, pompous, ostentatious language, which almost necessarily springs from an attempt to sustain a character above our powers. He talks of his glories as one to whom they were familiar, and of his intimacy and oneness with God, as simply as a child

speaks of his connexion with his parents. He speaks of saving and judging the world, of drawing all men to himself, and of giving everlasting life, as we speak of the ordinary powers which we exert. He makes no set harangues about the grandeur of his office and character. His consciousness of it gives a hue to his whole language, breaks out in indirect, undesigned expressions, showing that it was the deepest and most familiar of his convictions. This argument is only to be understood by reading the Gospels with a wakeful mind and heart. It does not lie on their surface, and it is the stronger for lying beneath it. When I read these books with care, when I trace the unaffected majesty which runs through the life of Jesus, and see him never falling below his sublime claims amidst poverty, and scorn, and in his last agony, I have a feeling of the reality of his character which I cannot express. I feel that the Jewish carpenter could no more have conceived and sustained this character under motives of imposture, than an infant's arm could repeat the deeds of Hercules, or his unawakened intellect comprehend and rival the matchless works of genius.

Am I told that the claims of Jesus had their origin, not in imposture but in enthusiasm; that the imagination, kindled by strong feeling, overpowered the judgment so far as to give him the notion of being destined to some strange and unparalleled work? I know that enthusiasm, or a kindled imagination, has great power; and we are never to lose sight of it, in judging of the claims of religious teachers. But I say first, that, except in cases where it amounts to insanity, enthusiasm works, in a greater or less degree, according to a man's previous conceptions and modes of thought. In Judea, where the minds of men were burning with feverish expectation of a Messiah, I can easily conceive of a Jew imagining that in himself this ardent conception, this ideal of glory, was to be realised. I can conceive of his seating himself in fancy on the throne of David, and secretly pondering the means of his appointed triumphs. But that a Jew should fancy himself the Messiah, and at the same time should strip that character of all the attributes

which had fired his youthful imagination and heart—that he should start aside from all the feelings and hopes of his age, and should acquire a consciousness of being destined to a wholly new career; and one as unbounded as it was new, this is exceedingly improbable; and one thing is certain, that an imagination so erratic, so ungoverned, and able to generate the conviction of being destined to a work so immeasureably disproportioned to the power of the individual, must have partaken of insanity. Now is it conceivable, that an individual, mastered by so wild and fervid an imagination, should have sustained the dignity claimed by Christ, should have acted worthily the highest part ever assumed on earth? Would not his enthusiasm have broken out amidst the peculiar excitements of the life of Jesus, and have left a touch of madness on his teaching and conduct? Is it to such a man that we should look for the inculcation of a new and perfect form of virtue, and for the exemplification of humanity in its fairest form?

The charge of an extravagant, self-deluding enthusiasm, is the last to be fastened on Jesus. Where can we find the traces of it in his history? Do we detect them in the calm authority of his precepts; in the mild, practical, and beneficent spirit of his religion; in the unlaboured simplicity of the language with which he unfolds his high powers, and the sublime truths of religion; or in the good sense, the knowledge of human nature, which he always discovers in his estimate and treatment of the different classes of men with whom he acted? Do we discover this enthusiasm in the singular fact, that whilst he claimed power in the future world, and always turned men's minds to heaven, he never indulged his own imagination, or stimulated that of his disciples, by giving vivid pictures, or any minute description, of that unseen state? The truth is, that, remarkable as was the character of Jesus, it was distinguished by nothing more than by calmness and self-possession. This trait pervades his other excellences. How calm was his piety! Point me, if you can, to one vehement, passionate expression of his religious feelings. Does the Lord's Prayer breathe a feverish enthusiasm? The habitual

style of Jesus on the subject of religion, if introduced into many churches of his followers at the present day, would be charged with coldness. The calm and the rational character of his piety is particularly seen in the doctrine which he so earnestly inculcates, that disinterested love and self-denying service to our fellow-creatures are the most acceptable worship we can offer to our Creator. His benevolence too, though singularly earnest and deep, was composed and serene. He never lost the possession of himself in his sympathy with others; was never hurried into the impatient and rash enterprises of an enthusiastic philanthropy; but did good with the tranquillity and constancy which mark the providence of God. The depth of his calmness may best be understood by considering the opposition made to his claims. His labours were every where insidiously watched and industriously thwarted by vindictive foes, who had even conspired to compass, through his death, the ruin of his cause. Now a feverish enthusiasm, which fancies itself to be entrusted with a great work of God, is singularly liable to impatient indignation under furious and malignant opposition. Obstacles increase its vehemence; it becomes more eager and hurried in the accomplishment of its purposes, in proportion as they are withstood. Be it therefore remembered, that the malignity of Christ's foes, though never surpassed, and for the time triumphant, never robbed him of self-possession, roused no passion, and threw no vehemence or precipitation into his exertions. He did not disguise from himself or his followers the impression made on the multitude by his adversaries. He distinctly foresaw the violent death towards which he was fast approaching. Yet, confiding in God, and in the silent progress of his truth, he possessed his soul in peace. Not only was he calm, but his calmness rises into sublimity when we consider the storms which raged around him, and the vastness of the prospects in which his spirit found repose. I say, then, that serenity and self-possession were peculiarly the attributes of Jesus. I affirm, that the singular and sublime character claimed by Jesus, can be traced neither to imposture, nor to an ungoverned, insane imagination. It can only be accounted for by its truth, its reality.

I began with observing how our long familiarity with Jesus blunts our minds to his singular excellence. We probably have often read of the character which he claimed, without a thought of its extraordinary nature. But I know nothing so sublime. The plans and labours of statesmen sink into the sports of children, when compared with the work which Jesus announced, and to which he devoted himself in life and death, with a thorough consciousness of its reality. The idea of changing the moral aspect of the whole earth, of recovering all nations to the pure and inward worship of one God, and to a spirit of divine and fraternal love, was one of which we meet not a trace in philosopher or legislator before him. The human mind had given no promise of this extent of view. The conception of this enterprise, and the calm, unshaken expectation of success, in one who had no station and no wealth, who cast from him the sword with abhorrence, and who forbade his disciples to use any weapons but those of love, discover a wonderful trust in the power of God and the power of love; and when to this we add, that Jesus looked not only to the triumph of his pure faith in the present world, but to a mighty and beneficent power in heaven, we witness a vastness of purpose, a grandeur of thought and feeling, so original, so superior to the workings of all other minds, that nothing but our familiarity can prevent our contemplation of it with wonder and profound awe. I confess, when I can escape the deadening power of habit, and can receive the full import of such passages as the following:—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—"I am come to seek and to save that which was lost"—"He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven"—"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me before men, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels"—"In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you;"—I say, when I can succeed in realising the import of such passages, I feel myself listening to a being, such as never before and never since spoke in human language. I am

awed by the consciousness of greatness which these simple words express; and when I connect this greatness with the proofs of Christ's miracles which I gave you in a former discourse, I am compelled to exclaim with the centurion, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

I have thus, my friends, set before you one view of Jesus Christ, which shows him to have been the most extraordinary being who ever lived. I invite your attention to another; and I am not sure, but that it is still more striking. You have seen the consciousness of greatness which Jesus possessed; I now ask you to consider, how, with this consciousness, he lived among men. To convey my meaning more distinctly, let me avail myself of an imaginary case. Suppose you had never heard the particulars of Christ's history, but were told in general, that, ages ago, an extraordinary man appeared in the world, whose mind was wholly possessed with the idea of having come from God, who regarded himself as clothed with divine power and charged with the sublimest work in the universe, who had the consciousness of sustaining a relation of unexampled authority and beneficence, not to one nation or age, but to all nations and all times—and who anticipated a spiritual kingdom and everlasting power beyond the grave. Suppose you should be told, that, on entering the world, he found not one mind able to comprehend his views, and felt himself immeasurably exalted in thought and purpose above all around him; and suppose you should then be asked what appearance, what mode of life, what tone, what air, what deportment, what intercourse with the multitude seemed to you to suit such a character, and were probably adopted by him; how would you represent him to your minds? Would you not suppose, that, with this peculiar character, he adopted some peculiar mode of life, expressive of his superiority to and separation from all other men? Would you not expect something distinctive in his appearance? Would you not expect him to assume some badge, and to exact some homage? Would you not expect, that, with a mind revolving such vast thoughts and raised above the earth, he would look coldly on the ordinary

gratifications of men? that, with a mind spreading itself over the world, and meditating its subjection to his truth, he would take little interest in ordinary individuals? and that, possessing, in his own doctrine and character, a standard of sublime virtue, he would attach little importance to the low attainments of the ignorant and superstitious around him? Would you not make him a public character, and expect to see him labouring to establish his ascendancy among public men? Would you not expect to see his natural affections absorbed in his universal philanthropy; and would not private attachments seem to you quite inconsistent with his vast superiority, and the immensity of his purposes? Would you not expect him to avail himself of the best accommodations the world could afford? Would you not expect the great Teacher to select the most sacred spots for his teaching, and the Lord of all to erect some conspicuous seat, from which should go forth the laws which were to reach the ends of the earth? Would you not, in a word, expect this extraordinary personage to surround himself with extraordinary circumstances, and to maintain a separation from the degraded multitude around him?

Such, I believe, would be the expectation of us all; and what was the case with Jesus? Read his history. He comes with the consciousness of more than human greatness, to accomplish an infinite work; and where do you find him? What is his look? what is his manner? How does he converse, how live with men? His appearance, mode of life, and intercourse are directly the reverse of what we should have supposed. He comes in the ordinary dress of the class of society in which he had grown up. He retreats to no solitude, like John, to strike awe, nor seeks any spot which had been consecrated in Jewish history. Would you find him? Go to the house of Peter, the fisherman. Go to the well of Samaria, where he rests after the fatigues of his journey. Would you hear him teach? You may find him, indeed, sometimes in the temple, for that was a place of general resort; but commonly you may find him instructing in the open air, now from a boat on the

Galilean lake, now on a mount, and now in the streets of the crowded city. He has no place wherein to lay his head, nor will he have one. A rich ruler comes and falls at his feet. He says, "Go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and then come and follow me." Nor was this all. Something more striking remains to be told. He did not merely live in the streets, and in the houses of fishermen. In these places, had he pleased, he might have cleared a space around him, and raised a barrier between himself and others. But in these places, and every where, he lived with men as a man, a brother, a friend, sometimes a servant; and entered, with a deep, unexampled sympathy, into the feelings, interests, wants, sorrows of individuals, of ordinary men, and even of the most depressed, despised, and forsaken of the race. Here is the most striking view of Jesus. This combination of the spirit of humanity, in its lowliest, tenderest form, with the consciousness of unrivalled and divine glories, is the most wonderful distinction of this wonderful character. Here we learn the chief reason, why he chose poverty, and refused every peculiarity of manner and appearance. He did this because he desired to come near to the multitude of men, to make himself accessible to all, to pour out the fulness of his sympathy upon all, to know and weep over their sorrows and sins, and to manifest his interest in their affections and joys.

I can offer but a few instances of this sympathy of Christ with human nature in all its varieties of character and condition. But how beautiful are they? At the very opening of his ministry, we find him present at a marriage, to which he and his disciples had been called. Among the Jews this was an occasion of peculiar exhilaration and festivity; but Jesus did not therefore decline it. He knew what affections, joys, sorrows, and moral influences are bound up in this institution, and he went to the celebration, not as an ascetic, to frown on its bright hopes and warm congratulations, but to sanction it by his presence, and to heighten its enjoyments. How little does this comport with the solitary dignity, which we should have pronounced most ac-

cordant with his character; and what a spirit of humanity does it breathe! But this event stands almost alone in his history. His chief sympathy was not with them that rejoice, but with the ignorant, sinful, sorrowful; and with these we find him cultivating an habitual intimacy. Though so exalted in thought and purpose, he chose uneducated men to be his chief disciples; and he lived with them, not as a superior, giving occasional and formal instruction, but became their companion, travelled with them on foot, slept in their dwellings, sat at their tables, partook of their plain fare, communicated to them his truth in the simplest form; and though they constantly misunderstood him, and never received his full meaning, he was never wearied with teaching them. So familiar was his intercourse, that we find Peter reproving him with an affectionate zeal, for announcing his approaching death, and we find John leaning on his bosom. Of his last discourse to these disciples I need not speak. It stands alone among all writings for the union of tenderness and majesty. His own sorrows are forgotten in his solicitude to speak peace and comfort to his humble followers.

The depth of his human sympathies was beautifully manifested when children were brought to him. His disciples, judging as all men would judge, thought that he who was sent to wear the crown of universal empire, had too great a work before him to give his time and attention to children, and reproved the parents who brought them; but Jesus, rebuking his disciples, called to him the children. Never, I believe, did childhood awaken such deep love as at that moment. He took them in his arms and blessed them, and not only said that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," but added, "He that receiveth a little child in my name, receiveth me;" so entirely did he identify himself with this primitive, innocent, beautiful form of human nature.

There was no class of human beings so low as to be beneath his sympathy. He not merely taught the publican and sinner, but, with all his consciousness of purity, sat down and dined with them, and, when reproved by the malignant Pharisee for such companionship, an-

swered by the touching parables of the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son, and said, "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost."

No personal suffering dried up this fountain of love in his breast. On his way to the cross, he heard some women of Jerusalem bewailing him, and at the sound, forgetting his own grief, he turned to them and said, "Women of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." On the cross, whilst his mind was divided between intense suffering, and the contemplation of the infinite blessings in which his sufferings were to issue, his eye lighted on his mother and John, and the sensibilities of a son and a friend mingled with the sublime consciousness of the universal Lord and Saviour. Never before did natural affection find so tender and beautiful an utterance. To his mother he said, directing her to John, "*Behold thy son;* I leave my beloved disciple to take my place, to perform my filial offices, and to enjoy a share of that affection with which you have followed me through life;" and to John he said, "*Behold thy mother;* I bequeath to you the happiness of ministering to my dearest earthly friend." Nor is this all. The spirit of humanity had one higher triumph. Whilst his enemies surrounded him with a malignity unsoftened by his last agonies, and, to give the keenest edge to insult, reminded him scoffingly of the high character and office which he had claimed, his only notice of them was the prayer, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Thus Jesus lived with men; with the consciousness of unutterable majesty, he joined a lowliness, gentleness, humanity and sympathy, which have no example in human history. I ask you to contemplate this wonderful union. In proportion to the superiority of Jesus to all around him, was the intimacy, the brotherly love, with which he bound himself to them. I maintain, that this is a character wholly remote from human conception. To imagine it to be the production of imposture or enthusiasm, shows a strange unsoundness of mind. I contemplate it with a veneration second only to the profound awe with which I look up to God. It bears

no mark of human invention. It was real. It belonged to and it manifested the beloved Son of God.

But I have not done. May I ask your attention a few moments more? We have not yet reached the depth of Christ's character. We have not touched the great principle, on which his wonderful sympathy was founded, and which endeared to him his office of universal Saviour. Do you ask what this deep principle was? I answer, It was his conviction of the greatness of the human soul. He saw in man the impress and image of the Divinity, and therefore thirsted for his redemption, and took the tenderest interest in him, whatever might be the rank, character, or condition in which he was found. This spiritual view of man pervades and distinguishes the teaching of Christ. Jesus looked on men with an eye which pierced beneath the material frame. The body vanished before him. The trappings of the rich, the rags of the poor, were nothing to him. He looked through them, as though they did not exist, to the soul; and there, amidst clouds of ignorance and plague-spots of sin, he recognised a spiritual and immortal nature, and the germs of power and perfection which might be unfolded for ever. In the most fallen and depraved man, he saw a being who might become an angel of light. Still more, he felt that there was nothing in himself to which men might not ascend. His own lofty consciousness did not sever him from the multitude; for he saw in his own greatness the model of what men might become. So deeply was he thus impressed, that again and again, in speaking of his future glories, he announced, that in these his true followers were to share. They were to sit on his throne, and partake of his beneficent power.

Here I pause, and indeed I know not what can be added to heighten the wonder, reverence, and love which are due to Jesus. When I consider him, not only as possessed with the consciousness of an unexampled and unbounded majesty, but as recognising a kindred nature in all human beings, and living and dying to raise them to a participation of his divine glories; and when I see him under these views, allying himself to men by the

tenderest ties, embracing them with a spirit of humanity, which no insult, injury, or pain could for a moment repel or overpower, I am filled with wonder as well as reverence and love. I feel that this character is not of human invention, that it was not assumed through fraud, or struck out by enthusiasm; for it is infinitely above their reach. When I add this character of Jesus to the other evidences of his religion, it gives to what before seemed so strong, a new and vast accession of strength; I feel as if I could not be deceived. The Gospels must be true; they were drawn from a living original; they were founded on reality. The character of Jesus is not a fiction; he was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested. Nor is this all. Jesus not only *was*, he is still, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. He exists now; he has entered that heaven to which he always looked forward on earth. There he lives and reigns. With a clear, calm faith, I see him in that state of glory; and I confidently expect, at no distant period, to see him face to face. We have indeed no absent friend whom we shall so surely meet. Let us then, my hearers, by imitation of his virtues and obedience to his word, prepare ourselves to join him in those pure mansions, where he is surrounding himself with the good and pure of our race, and will communicate to them for ever his own spirit, power, and joy.

REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Romans i. 16.—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

SUCH was the language of Paul; and every man will respond to it, who comprehends the character and has felt the influence of Christianity. In a former discourse, I proposed to state to you some reasons for adopting as our own the words of the Apostle, for joining in this open and resolute testimony to the gospel of Christ. I observed, that I was not ashamed of the gospel, first because it is true, and to this topic the discourse was devoted. I wish now to continue the subject and to state another ground of undisguised and unshaken adherence to Christianity. I say, then, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it is a *rational* religion. It agrees with reason; therefore I count it worthy of acceptation, therefore I do not blush to enrol myself among its friends and advocates. The object of the present discourse will be the illustration of this claim of Christianity. I wish to show you the harmony which subsists between the light of God's Word, and that primitive light of reason, which he has kindled within us to be our perpetual guide. If, in treating this subject, I shall come into conflict with any class of Christians, I trust I shall not be considered as imputing to them any moral or intellectual defect. I judge men by their motives, dispositions, and lives, and not by their speculations or peculiar opinions; and I esteem piety and virtue equally venerable, whether found in friend or foe.

Christianity is a rational religion. Were it not so, I should be ashamed to profess it. I am aware that it is

the fashion with some to decry reason, and to set up revelation as an opposite authority. This error though countenanced by good men, and honestly maintained for the defence of the Christian cause, ought to be earnestly withstood; for it virtually surrenders our religion into the hands of the unbeliever. It saps the foundation to strengthen the building. It places our religion in hostility to human nature, and gives to its adversaries the credit of vindicating the rights and noblest powers of the mind.

We must never forget that our rational nature is the greatest gift of God. For this we owe him our chief gratitude. It is a greater gift than any outward aid or benefaction, and no doctrine which degrades it can come from its Author. The developement of it is the end of our being. Revelation is but a means, and is designed to concur with nature, providence, and God's spirit, in carrying forward reason to its perfection. I glory in Christianity because it enlarges, invigorates, exalts my rational nature. If I could not be a Christian without ceasing to be rational, I should not hesitate as to my choice. I feel myself bound to sacrifice to Christianity property, reputation, life; but I ought not to sacrifice to any religion, that reason which lifts me above the brute and constitutes me a man. I can conceive no sacrilege greater than to prostrate or renounce the highest faculty which we have derived from God. In so doing we should offer violence to the divinity within us. Christianity wages no war with reason, but is one with it, and is given to be its helper and friend.

I wish, in the present discourse, to illustrate and confirm the views now given. My remarks will be arranged under two heads. I propose, first, to show that Christianity is founded on, and supposes the authority of reason, and cannot therefore oppose it without subverting itself. My object in this part of the discourse will be to expose the error of those who hope to serve revelation by disparaging reason. I shall then, in the second place, compare Christianity and the light of reason, to show their accordance; and shall prove, by descending to particulars, that Christianity is eminently

a rational religion. My aim, under this head, will be to vindicate the Gospel from the reproaches of the unbeliever, and to strengthan the faith and attachment of its friends. Before I begin, let me observe that this discussion, from the nature of the subject, must assume occasionally an abstract form, and will demand serious attention. I am to speak of reason, the chief faculty of the mind; and no simplicity of language in treating such a topic can exempt the hearer from the necessity of a patient effort of thought.

I am to begin with showing that the Christian revelation is founded on the authority of reason, and consequently cannot oppose it; and here it may be proper to settle the meaning of the word reason. One of the most important steps towards the truth, is to determine the import of terms. Very often fierce controversies have sprung from obscurity of language, and the parties, on explaining themselves, have discovered that they have been spending their strength in a war of words. What, then, is reason?

The term reason is used with so much latitude, that to fix its precise limits is not an easy task. In this respect it agrees with the other words which express the intellectual faculties. One idea, however, is always attached to it. All men understand by reason the highest faculty or energy of the mind. Without labouring for a philosophical definition that will comprehend all its exercises, I shall satisfy myself with pointing out two of its principal characteristics or functions.

First, it belongs to reason to comprehend universal truths. This is among its most important offices. There are particular and there are universal truths. The last are the noblest, and the capacity of perceiving them is the distinction of intelligent beings; and these belong to reason. Let me give my meaning by some illustrations. I see a stone falling to the ground. This is a particular truth; but I do not stop here. I believe that not only this particular stone falls towards the earth, but that every particle of matter, in whatever world, tends, or, as is sometimes said, is attracted towards all other matter. Here is a universal truth, a principle extending to

the whole material creation, and essential to its existence. This truth belongs to reason. Again, I see a man producing some effect, a manufacture, a house. Here is a particular truth. But I am not only capable of seeing particular causes and effects; I am sure that every thing which begins to exist, no matter when or where, must have a cause, that no change ever has taken place or ever will take place without a cause. Here is a universal truth, something true here and every where, true now and through eternity; and this truth belongs to reason. Again, I see with my eyes, I traverse with my hands a limited space; but this is not all. I am sure, that, beyond the limits which my limbs or senses reach, there is an unbounded space; that, go where I will, an infinity will spread around me. Here is another universal truth, and this belongs to reason. The idea of infinity is indeed one of the noblest conceptions of this faculty. Again, I see a man conferring a good on another. Here is a particular truth or perception. But my mind is not confined to this. I see and feel that it is right for all intelligent beings, exist when or where they may, to do good, and wrong for them to seek the misery of others. Here is a universal truth, a law extending from God to the lowest human being; and this belongs to reason. I trust I have conveyed to you my views in regard to the first characteristic of this highest power of the soul. Its office is to discern universal truths, great and eternal principles. But it does not stop here. Reason is also exercised in applying these universal truths to particular cases, beings, events. For example, reason teaches me, as we have seen, that all changes without exception require a cause; and in conformity to this principle, it prompts me to seek the particular causes of the endless changes and appearances which fall under my observation. Thus reason is perpetually at work on the ideas furnished us by the senses, by consciousness, by memory, associating them with its own great truths, or investing them with its own universality.

I now proceed to the second function of reason, which is indeed akin to the first. Reason is the power which tends, and is perpetually striving, to reduce our various

thoughts to unity or consistency. Perhaps the most fundamental conviction of reason is, that all truths agree together; that inconsistency is the mark of error. Its intensest, most earnest effort is to bring concord into the intellect, to reconcile what seem to be clashing views. On the observation of a new fact, reason strives to incorporate it with former knowledge. It can allow nothing to stand separate in the mind. It labours to bring together scattered truths, and to give them the strength and beauty of a vital order. Its end and delight is harmony. It is shocked by an inconsistency in belief, just as a fine ear is wounded by discord. It carries within itself an instinctive consciousness, that all things which exist are intimately bound together; and it cannot rest until it has connected whatever we witness with the infinite whole. Reason, according to this view, is the most glorious form or exercise of the intellectual nature. It corresponds to the unity of God and the universe, and seeks to make the soul the image and mirror of this sublime unity.

I have thus given my views of reason; but, to prevent all perversion, before I proceed to the main discussion, let me offer a word or two more of explanation. In this discourse, when I speak of the accordance of revelation with reason, I suppose this faculty to be used deliberately, conscientiously, and with the love of truth. Men often baptise with the name of reason their prejudices, unexamined notions, or opinions adopted through interest, pride, or other unworthy biasses. It is not uncommon to hear those who sacrifice the plainest dictates of the rational nature to impulse and passion, setting themselves up as oracles of reason. Now when I say revelation must accord with reason, I do not mean by the term the corrupt and superficial opinions of men who have betrayed and debased their rational powers. I mean reason, calmly, honestly exercised for the acquisition of truth and the invigoration of virtue.

After these explanations, I proceed to the discussion of the two leading principles to which this discourse is devoted.

First, I am to show that revelation is founded on the

authority of reason, and cannot therefore oppose or disparage it without subverting itself. Let me state a few of the considerations which convince me of the truth of this position. The first is, that reason alone makes us capable of receiving a revelation. It must previously exist and operate, or we should be wholly unprepared for the communications of Christ. Revelation, then, is built on reason. You will see the truth of these remarks if you will consider to whom revelation is sent. Why is it given to men rather than to brutes? Why have not God's messengers gone to the fields to proclaim his glad tidings to bird and beast?. The answer is obvious. These want reason; and, wanting this, they have no capacity or preparation for revealed truth. And not only would revelation be lost on the brute; let it speak to the child, before its rational faculties have been awakened, and before some ideas of duty and its own nature have been developed, and it might as well speak to a stone. Reason is the preparation and ground of revelation.

This truth will be still more obvious, if we consider, not only to whom, but in what way, the Christian revelation is communicated. How is it conveyed? In words. Did it make these words? No. They were in use ages before its birth. Again I ask, Did it make the ideas or thoughts which these words express? No. If the hearers of Jesus had not previously attached ideas to the terms which he employed, they could not have received his meaning. He might as well have spoken to them in a foreign tongue. Thus the ideas which enter into Christianity subsisted before. They were ideas of reason; so that to this faculty revelation owes the materials of which it is composed.

Revelation, we must remember, is not our earliest teacher. Man is not born with the single power of reading God's Word, and sent immediately to that guide. His eyes open first on another volume, that of the Creation. Long before he can read the Bible, he looks round on the earth and sky. He reads the countenances of his friends, and hears and understands their voices. He looks too, by degrees, within himself and acquires

some ideas of his own soul. Thus his first school is that of nature and reason, and this is necessary to prepare him for a communication from Heaven. Revelation does not find the mind a blank, a void, prepared to receive unresistingly whatever may be offered; but finds it in possession of various knowledge from nature and experience, and, still more, in possession of great principles, fundamental truths, moral ideas, which are derived from itself, and which are the germs of all its future improvement. This last view is peculiarly important. The mind does not receive every thing from abroad. Its great ideas arise from itself, and by those native lights it reads and comprehends the volumes of nature and revelation. We speak, indeed, of nature and revelation as making known to us an intelligent First Cause; but the ideas of intelligence and causation we derive originally from our own nature. The elements of the idea of God we gather from ourselves. Power, wisdom, love, virtue, beauty, and happiness, words which contain all that is glorious in the universe and interesting in our existence, express attributes of the mind, and are understood by us only through consciousness. It is true, these ideas or principles of reason are often obscured by thick clouds, and mingled with many and deplorable errors. Still they are never lost. Christianity recognises them, is built on them, and needs them as its interpreters. If an illustration of these views be required, I would point you to what may be called the most fundamental idea of religion. I mean the idea of right, of duty. Do we derive this originally and wholly from sacred books? Has not every human being, whether born within or beyond the bounds of revelation, a sense of the distinction between right and wrong? Is there not an earlier voice than revelation, approving or rebuking men according to their deeds? In barbarous ages is not conscience heard? And does it not grow more articulate with the progress of society? Christianity does not create, but presupposes the idea of duty; and the same may be said of other great convictions. Revelation, then, does not stand alone, nor is it addressed to a blank and passive mind. It was

meant to be a joint-worker with other teachers, with nature, with Providence, with conscience, with our rational powers; and as these all are given us by God, they cannot differ from each other. God must agree with himself. He has but one voice. It is man who speaks with jarring tongues. Nothing but harmony can come from the Creator; and accordingly, a religion claiming to be from God, can give no surer proof of falsehood, than by contradicting those previous truths which God is teaching by our very nature. We have thus seen that reason prepares us for a divine communication, and that it furnishes the ideas or materials of which revelation consists. This is my first consideration.

I proceed to a second. I affirm, then, that revelation rests on the authority of reason, because to this faculty it submits the evidences of its truth, and nothing but the approving sentence of reason binds us to receive and obey it. This is a very weighty consideration. Christianity, in placing itself before the tribunal of reason, and in resting its claims on the sanction of this faculty, is one of the chief witnesses to the authority and dignity of our rational nature. That I have ascribed to this faculty its true and proper office, may be easily made to appear. I take the New Testament in hand, and on what ground do I receive its truths as divine? I see nothing on its pages but the same letters in which other books are written. No miraculous voice from heaven assures me that it is God's word, nor does any mysterious voice within my soul command me to believe the supernatural works of Christ. How, then, shall I settle the question of the origin of this religion? I must examine it by the same rational faculties by which other subjects are tried. I must ask what are its evidences, and I must lay them before reason, the only power by which evidence can be weighed. I have not a distinct faculty given me for judging a revelation. I have not two understandings, one for inquiring into God's word and another into his works. As with the same bodily eye I now look on the earth, now on the heavens, so with the same power of reason I examine now nature,

now revelation. Reason must collect and weigh the various proofs of Christianity. It must especially compare this system with those great moral convictions, which are written by the finger of God on the heart, and which make man a law to himself. A religion subverting these, it must not hesitate to reject, be its evidences what they may. A religion, for example, commanding us to hate and injure society, reason must instantly discard, without even waiting to examine its proofs. From these views we learn, not only that it is the province of reason to judge of the truth of Christianity, but what is still more important, that the rules or tests by which it judges are of its own dictation. The laws which it applies in this case have their origin in itself. No one will pretend, that revelation can prescribe the principles by which the question of its own truth should be settled; for, until proved to be true, it has no authority. Reason must prescribe the tests or standards, to which a professed communication from God should be referred; and among these none are more important than the moral law, which belongs to the very essence, and is the deepest conviction, of the rational nature. Revelation, then, rests on reason, and in opposing it, would act for its own destruction.

I have given two views. I have shown that revelation draws its ideas or materials from reason, and that it appeals to this power as the judge of its truth. I now assert, thirdly, that it rests on the authority of reason, because it needs and expects this faculty to be its interpreter, and without this aid would be worse than useless. How is the right interpretation, the real meaning of the Scriptures to be ascertained? I answer, By reason. I know of no process by which the true sense of the New Testament is to pass from the page into my mind without the use of my rational faculties. It will not be pretended that this book is so exceedingly plain, its words so easy, its sentences so short, its meaning so exposed on the surface, that the whole truth may be received in a moment, and without any intellectual effort. There is no such miraculous simplicity in the Scriptures. In truth, no book can be written so simply as to need

no exercise of reason. Almost every word has more than one meaning, and judgment is required to select the particular sense intended by the writer. Of all books, perhaps the Scriptures need most the use of reason for their just interpretation; and this, not from any imperfection, but from the strength, boldness, and figurative character of their style, and from the distance of the time when they were written. I open the New Testament and my eye lights on this passage: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee." Is this language to be interpreted in its plainest and most obvious sense? Then I must mutilate my body, and become a suicide. I look again, and I find Jesus using these words to the Jews: "Fill ye up the measure of your fathers." Am I to interpret this according to the letter, or the first ideas which it suggests? Then Jesus commanded his hearers to steep themselves in crime, and was himself a minister of sin. It is only by a deliberate use of reason, that we can penetrate beneath the figurative, hyperbolical, and often obscure style of the New Testament, to the real meaning. Let me go to the Bible, dismissing my reason and taking the first impression which the words convey, and there is no absurdity, however gross, into which I shall not fall. I shall ascribe a limited body to God, and unbounded knowledge to man; for I read of God having limbs, and of man knowing all things. Nothing is plainer, than that I must compare passage with passage, and limit one by another, and especially limit all by those plain and universal principles of reason, which are called common sense, or I shall make revelation the patron of every folly and vice. So essential is reason to the interpretation of the Christian Records. Revelation rests upon its authority. Can it, then, oppose it, or teach us to hold it in light esteem?

I have now furnished the proofs of my first position, that revelation is founded on reason; and in discussing this I have wished not only to support the main doctrine, but to teach you to reverence, more perhaps than you have done, your rational nature. This has been decried by theologians, until men have ceased to feel its sacred-

ness and dignity. It ought to be regarded as God's greatest gift. It is his image within us. To renounce it would be to offer a cruel violence to ourselves, to take our place among the brutes. Better pluck out the eye, better quench the light of the body, than the light within us. We all feel, that the loss of reason, when produced by disease, is the most terrible calamity of life, and we look on an hospital for the insane as the receptacle of the most pitiable of our race. But, in one view, insanity is not so great an evil as the prostration of reason to a religious sect or a religious chief; for the first is a visitation of Providence, the last is a voluntary act, the work of our own hands.

I am aware that those who have spoken most contemptuously of human reason, have acted from a good motive; their aim has been to exalt revelation. They have thought that by magnifying this as the only means of divine teaching, they were adding to its dignity. But truth gains nothing by exaggeration; and Christianity, as we have seen, is undermined by nothing more effectually, than by the sophistry which would bring discredit on our rational powers. Revelation needs no such support. For myself I do not find, that, to esteem Christianity, I must think it the only source of instruction to which I must repair. I need not make Nature dumb, to give power or attraction to the teaching of Christ. The last derives new interest and confirmation from its harmony with the first. Christianity would furnish a weapon against itself, not easily repelled, should it claim the distinction of being the only light vouchsafed by God to men; for, in that case, it would represent a vast majority of the human race as left by their Creator without guidance or hope. I believe, and rejoice to believe, that a ray from heaven descends on the path of every fellow-creature. The heathen, though in darkness when compared with the Christian, has still his light; and it comes from the same source as our own, just as the same sun dispenses, now the faint dawn, and now the perfect day. Let not Nature's teaching be disparaged. It is from God as truly as his Word. It is sacred as truly as revelation. Both are manifestations

of one Infinite Mind, and harmonious manifestations; and without this agreement the claims of Christianity could not be sustained.

In offering these remarks, I have not forgotten that they will expose me to the reproach of ministering to "the pride of reason;" and I may be told, that there is no worse form of pride than this. The charge is so common, as to deserve a moment's attention. It will appear at once to be groundless, if you consider, that pride finds its chief nourishment and delight in the idea of our own superiority. It is built on something peculiar and distinctive, on something which separates us from others and raises us above them, and not on powers which we share with all around us. Now in speaking, as I have done, of the worth and dignity of reason, I have constantly regarded and represented this faculty as the common property of all human beings. I have spoken of its most important truths as universal and unconfined, such as no individual can monopolise or make the grounds of personal distinction or elevation. I have given, then, no occasion and furnished no nutriment to pride. I know, indeed, that the pride of reason or of intellect exists; but how does it chiefly manifest itself? Not in revering that rational nature, which all men have derived from God; but in exaggerating our particular acquisitions or powers, in magnifying our distinctive views, in looking contemptuously on other minds, in making ourselves standards for our brethren, in refusing new lights, and in attempting to establish dominion over the understandings of those who are placed within our influence. Such is the most common form of the pride of intellect. It is a vice confined to no sect, and perhaps will be found to prevail most where it is most disclaimed.

I doubt not that they who insist so continually on the duty of exalting Scripture above reason, consider themselves as particularly secured against the pride of reason. Yet none, I apprehend, are more open to the charge. Such persons are singularly prone to enforce their own interpretations of Scripture on others, and to see peril and crime in the adoption of different views from their

own. Now, let me ask, by what power do these men interpret revelation? Is it not by their reason? Have they any faculties but the rational ones, by which to compare Scripture with Scripture, to explain figurative language, to form conclusions as to the will of God? Do they not employ on God's word the same intellect as on his works? And are not their interpretations of both equally results of reason? It follows, that in imposing on others their explications of the Scriptures, they as truly arrogate to themselves a superiority of reason, as if they should require conformity to their explanations of nature. Nature and Scripture agree in this, that they cannot be understood at a glance. Both volumes demand patient investigation, and task all our powers of thought. Accordingly it is well known, that as much intellectual toil has been spent on theological systems as on the natural sciences; and unhappily it is not less known, that as much intellectual pride has been manifested in framing and defending the first as the last. I fear, indeed, that this vice has clung with peculiar obstinacy to the students of revelation. No where, I fear, have men manifested such infatuated trust in their own infallibility, such overweening fondness for their own conclusions, such positiveness, such impatience of contradiction, such arrogance towards the advocates of different opinions, as in the interpretation of the Scriptures; and yet these very men, who so idolise their own intellectual powers, profess to humble reason, and consider a criminal reliance on it as almost exclusively chargeable on others. The true defence against the pride of reason, is, not to speak of it contemptuously, but to reverence it as God's inestimable gift to every human being, and as given to all for never-ceasing improvements, of which we see but the dawn in the present acquisitions of the noblest mind.

I have now completed my views of the first principle, which I laid down in this discourse; namely, that the Christian revelation rests on the authority of reason. Of course, it cannot oppose reason without undermining and destroying itself. I maintain, however, that it does not oppose, that it perfectly accords with reason. It is

a rational religion. This is my second great position, and to this I ask your continued attention. This topic might easily be extended to a great length. I might state in succession all the principles of Christianity, and show their accordance with reason. But I believe that more general views will be more useful, and such only can be given within the compass of a discourse.

In the account which I gave you of reason in the beginning of this discourse, I confined myself to two of its functions, namely, its comprehension of universal truths, and the effort it constantly makes to reduce the thoughts to harmony or consistency. Universality and consistency are among the chief attributes of reason. Do we find these in Christianity? If so, its claim to the character of a rational religion will be established. These tests I will therefore apply to it, and I will begin with consistency.

That a religion be rational, nothing more is necessary than that its truths should consist or agree with one another, and with all other truths, whether derived from outward nature, or our own souls. Now I affirm, that the Christian doctrines have this agreement; and the more we examine, the more brightly this mark of truth will appear. I go to the Gospel, and I first compare its various parts with one another. Among these I find perfect harmony; and what makes this more remarkable is, that Christianity is not taught systematically, or like a science. Jesus threw out, if I may so speak, his precepts and doctrines incidentally, or as they were required by the occasion, and yet when they are brought together, they form a harmonious whole. I do not think it necessary to enlarge on this topic, because I believe it is not questioned by infidelity. I will name but one example of this harmony in Christianity. All its doctrines and all its precepts have that species of unity, which is most essential in a religion, that is, they all tend to one object. They all agree in a single aim or purpose, and that is to exalt the human character to a height of virtue never known before. Let the sceptic name, if he can, one Christian principle which has not a bearing on this end. A consistency of this kind is the

strongest mark of a rational religion which can be conceived. Let me observe, in passing, that, besides this harmony of the Christian doctrines with one another, there is a striking and beautiful agreement between the teachings of Jesus and his character, which gives confirmation to both. Whatever Jesus taught, you may see embodied in himself. There is perfect unity between the system and its Founder. His life republished what fell from his lips. With his lips he enjoined earnestly, constantly, a strong and disinterested philanthropy; and how harmoniously and sublimely did his cross join with his word in enforcing this exalted virtue. With his lips he taught the mercy of God to sinners; and of this attribute he gave a beautiful illustration in his own deep interest in the sinful, in his free intercourse with the most fallen, and in his patient efforts to recover them to virtue and to filial reliance on their Father in heaven. So, his preaching turned much on the importance of raising the mind above the world; and his own life was a constant renunciation of worldly interests, a cheerful endurance of poverty, that he might make many truly rich. So, his discourses continually revealed to man the doctrine of immortality; and in his own person he brought down this truth to men's senses, by rising from the dead and ascending to another state of being.—I have only glanced at the unity which subsists between Jesus and his religion. Christianity, from every point of view, will be found a harmonious system. It breathes throughout one spirit and one purpose. Its doctrines, precepts, and examples have the consistency of reason.

But this is not enough. A rational religion must agree not only with itself, but with all other truths whether revealed by the outward creation or our own souls. I take, then, Christianity into the creation, I place it by the side of nature. Do they agree? I say, Perfectly. I can discover nothing, in what claims to be God's word, at variance with his works. This is a bright proof of the reasonableness of Christianity. When I consult nature with the lights modern science affords, I see continually multiplying traces of the doctrine of One God. The more I extend my researches into nature,

the more I see that it is a whole, the product of one wisdom, power, and goodness. It bears witness to one Author, nor has its testimony been without effect; for although the human mind has often multiplied its objects of worship, still it has always tended towards the doctrine of the divine unity, and has embraced it more and more firmly in the course of human improvement. The heathen, while he erected many altars, generally believed in one Supreme Divinity, to whom the inferior deities were subjected and from whom they sprung. Need I tell you of the harmony which subsists between nature and revelation in this particular? To Christianity belongs the glory of having proclaimed this primitive truth with new power, and of having spread it over the whole civilised world.—Again; nature gives intimation of another truth, I mean of the universal, impartial goodness of God. When I look round on the creation, I see nothing to lead me to suspect that its Author confines his love to a few. The sun sends no brighter beam into the palace of the proudest king, than into the hut of the meanest peasant. The clouds select not one man's fields rather than his neighbour's, but shed down their blessings on rich and poor, and still more on the just and the unjust. True, there is a variety of conditions among men; but this takes place, not by any interposition of God, but by fixed and general laws of nature. Impartial, universal goodness is the character in which God is revealed by his works, when they are properly understood; and need I tell you how brightly this truth shines in the pages of Christianity, and how this religion has been the great means of establishing it among men? —Again; when I look through nature, nothing strikes me more than the union which subsists among all its works. Nothing stands alone in the creation. The humblest plant has intimate connexions with the air, the clouds, the sun. Harmony is the great law of nature, and how strikingly does Christianity coincide here with God's works; for what is the design of this religion, but to bring the human race, the intelligent creation of God, into a harmony, union, peace, like that which knits together the outward universe? I will give another

illustration. It is one of the great laws of nature, that good shall come to us through agents of God's appointment; that beings shall receive life, support, knowledge, and safety, through the interposition and labours and sufferings of others. Sometimes whole communities are rescued from oppression and ruin chiefly by the efforts and sacrifices of a wise, disinterested, and resolute individual. How accordant with this ordination of nature is the doctrine of Christianity, that our Heavenly Father, having purposed our recovery from sin and death, has instituted for this end the agency and mediation of his Son; that he has given an illustrious deliverer to the world, through whose toils and sufferings we may rise to purity and immortal life. I say, then, that revelation is consistent with nature, when nature is truly interpreted by reason. I see it bringing out with noonday brightness the truths which dawn in nature; so that it is reason in its most perfect form.

I have thus carried Christianity abroad into nature. I now carry it within, and compare it with the human soul; and is it consistent with the great truths of reason which I discover there? I affirm, that it is. When I look into the soul, I am at once struck with its immeasurable superiority to the body. I am struck with the contrast between these different elements of my nature, between this active, soaring mind, and these limbs and material organs which tend perpetually to the earth, and are soon to be resolved into dust. How consistent is Christianity with this inward teaching. In Christianity, with what strength, with what bold relief, is the supremacy of the spiritual nature brought out. What contempt does Jesus cast on the body and its interests, when compared with the redemption of the soul.—Another great truth dawns on me when I look within. I learn more and more that the great springs of happiness and misery are in the mind, and that the efforts of men to secure peace by other processes than by inward purification are vain strivings; and Christianity is not only consistent with, but founded on this great truth; teaching us, that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and proposing, as its great end, to rescue the

mind from evil, and to endue it with strength and dignity worthy its divine orgin.—Again; when I look into the soul I meet intimations of another great truth. I discern in it capacities which are not fully unfolded here. I see desires which find no adequate good on earth. I see a principle of hope always pressing forward into futurity. Here are marks of a nature not made wholly for this world; and how does Christianity agree with this teaching of our own souls? Its great doctrine is that of a higher life, where the spiritual germ within us will open for ever, and where the immortal good after which the mind aspires will prove a reality. —Had I time, I might survey distinctly the various principles of the soul, the intellectual, moral, social, and active, and might show you how Christianity accords with them all, enlarging their scope and energy, proposing to them nobler objects, and aiding their developement by the impulse of a boundless hope. But, commending these topics to your private meditation, I will take but one more view of the soul. When I look within, I see stains of sin, and fears and forebodings of guilt; and how adapted to such a nature is Christianity, a religion which contains blood-sealed promises of forgiveness to the penitent, and which proffers heavenly strength to fortify us in our conflict with moral evil. I say, then, Christianity consists with the nature within us, as well as with nature around us. The highest truths in respect to the soul are not only responded to, but are carried out by Christianity, so that it deserves to be called the perfection of reason.

I have now shown, in a variety of particulars, that Christianity has the character of consistency, and thus satisfies the first demand of reason. It does not divide the mind against itself, does not introduce discord into the intellect, by proposing doctrines which our consciousness and experience repel. But these views do not exhaust the present topic. It is not enough to speak of Christianity as furnishing views which harmonise with one another, and with all known truth. It gives a new and cheering consistency to the views with which we are furnished by the universe. Nature and Providence,

ıll their beauty, regularity, and beneficence, have
ɜrplexing aspects. Their elements are often seen
nflict with one another. Sunshine and storms,
ıre and pain, success and disaster, abundance and
health and sickness, life and death, seem to or-
y spectators to be mixed together confusedly and
ut aim. Reason desires nothing so earnestly, so
usly, as to solve these discordant appearances, as
cover some great, central, reconciling truth, around
t they may be arranged, and from which they may
w light and harmony. This deep want of the ra-
nature, Christianity has supplied. It has disclosed
y of purpose in the seemingly hostile dispensations
ovidence, and opened to the mind a new world of
, beauty, and benevolent design. Christianity, re-
ıg as it does the unbounded mercy of God to his
creatures; revealing an endless futurity, in which
equalities of the present state are to be redressed,
hich reduces by its immensity the sorest pains of
ı light and momentary evils; revealing a Moral
ction, which is worth all pain and conflicts, and
is most effectually and gloriously won amidst suf-
and temptation; revealing in Jesus Christ the
ıity and rewards of tried and all-enduring virtue;
ling in him the founder of a new moral kingdom
wer, which is destined to subdue the world to God;
roffering the Holy Spirit to all who strive to build
themselves and others the reign of truth and vir-
Christianity, I say, by these revelations, has poured
ıd of light over nature and providence, and har-
ed the infinite complexity of the works and ways
ıd. Thus it meets the first want of the rational
ɜ, the craving for consistency of views. It is
ı's most effectual minister and friend. Is it not,
eminently a rational faith?

ving shown that Christianity has the character of
ıtency, I proceed to the second mark or stamp of
ı on a religion, that is, universality; and this I
for Christianity. This indeed is one of the most
guishing features of our religion, and so obvious
triking as to need little illustration. When I ex-

amine the doctrines, precepts, and spirit of Christianity, I discover in them all this character of universality. I discover nothing narrow, temporary, local. The Gospel bears the stamp of no particular age or country. It does not concern itself with the perishable interests of communities or individuals; but appeals to the spiritual, immortal, unbounded principle in human nature. Its aim is to direct the mind to the Infinite Being and to an infinite good. It is not made up, like other religions, of precise forms and details; but it inculcates immutable and all-comprehending principles of duty, leaving every man to apply them for himself to the endless variety of human conditions. It separates from God the partial, limited views of Judaism and heathenism, and holds him forth in the sublime attributes of the Universal Father. In like manner it inculcates philanthropy without exceptions or bounds; a love to man as man, a love founded on that immortal nature of which all men partake, and which binds us to recognise in each a child of God and a brother. The spirit of bigotry, which confines its charity to a sect, and the spirit of aristocracy, which looks on the multitude as an inferior race, are alike rebuked by Christianity; which, eighteen hundred years ago, in a narrow and superstitious age, taught, what the present age is beginning to understand, that all men are essentially equal, and that all are to be honoured, because made for immortality and endued with capacities of ceaseless improvement. The more I examine Christianity the more I am struck with its universality. I see in it a religion made for all regions and all times, for all classes and all stages of society. It is fitted, not to the Asiatic or the European, but to the essential principles of human nature, to man under the tropical or polar skies, to all descriptions of intellect and condition. It speaks a language which all men need and all can understand; enjoins a virtue, which is man's happiness and glory in every age and clime; and ministers consolations and hopes which answer to man's universal lot, to the sufferings, the fear, and the self-rebuke, which cleave to our nature in every outward change. I see in it the light, not of one nation, but of the world;

and a light reaching beyond the world, beyond time, to higher modes of existence and to an interminable futurity. Other religions have been intended to meet the exigencies of particular countries or times, and therefore society in its progress has outgrown them; but Christianity meets more and more the wants of the soul in proportion to the advancement of our race, and thus proves itself to be eternal truth. After these remarks, may I not claim for Christianity that character of universality which is the highest distinction of reason? To understand fully the confirmation which these views give to the Gospel, you must compare it with the religions prevalent in the age of Christ, all of which bore the marks of narrow, local, temporary institutions. How striking the contrast! And how singular the fact, that amid this darkness there sprung up a religion so consistent and universal, as to deserve to be called the perfection of reason!

I do and must feel, my friends, that the claim of Christianity to the honour of being a rational religion is fully established. As such I commend it to you. As such it will more and more approve itself, in proportion as you study and practise it. You will never find cause to complain, that by adopting it you have enslaved or degraded your highest powers. Here, then, I might stop, and might consider my work as done. But I am aware that objections have been made to the rational character of our religion, which may still linger in the minds of some of my hearers. A brief notice of these may aid the purpose, and will form a proper conclusion of this discourse.

I imagine, that were some who are present to speak, they would tell me, that if Christianity be judged by its fruits, it deserves any character but that of rational. I should be told that no religion has borne a more abundant harvest of extravagance and fanaticism. I should be told that reason is a calm, reflecting, sober principle, and I should be asked whether such is the character of the Christianity which has overspread the world. Perhaps some of you will remind me of the feverish, wild, passionate religion, which is now system-

atically dispersed through our country, and I shall be asked whether a system under which such delusions prevail, can be a rational one.

To these objections I answer, You say much that is true. I grant that reason is a calm and reflecting principle, and I see little calmness or reflection among many who take exclusively the name of Christ. But I say, you have no right to confound Christianity with its professors. This religion, as you know, has come down to us through many ages of darkness, during which it must have been corrupted and obscured. Common candour requires that you should judge of it as it came from its Founder. Go, then, to its original Records; place yourselves near Jesus; and tell me if you ever found yourselves in the presence of so calm a teacher. We indeed discern in Jesus great earnestness, but joined with entire self-control. Sensibility breathes through his whole teaching and life, but always tempered with wisdom. Amidst his boldest thoughts and expressions, we discover no marks of ungoverned feeling or a diseased imagination. Take, as an example, his longest discourse, the Sermon on the Mount. How weighty the thoughts! How grave and dignified the style! You recollect, that the multitude were astonished, not at the passionate vehemence, but at the authority, with which he spoke. Read next the last discourse of Jesus to his disciples in St. John's Gospel. What a deep, yet mild and subdued tenderness mingles with conscious greatness in that wonderful address. Take what is called the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus gave as the model of all prayer to God. Does that countenance fanatical fervour, or violent appeals to our Creator? Let me further ask, Does Jesus any where place religion in tumultuous, ungoverned emotion? Does he not teach us, that obedience, not feeling, marks and constitutes true piety, and that the most acceptable offering to God is to exercise mercy to our fellow-creatures? When I compare the clamorous preaching and passionate declamation, too common in the Christian world, with the composed dignity, the deliberate wisdom, the freedom from all extravagance, which characterised Jesus, I can imagine no greater

rast; and I am sure that the fiery zealot is no re-
entative of Christianity.
have done with the first objection; but another class
ɔjections is often urged against the reasonable char-
r of our religion. It has been strenuously main-
ɔd, that Christianity contains particular doctrines
h are irrational, and which involve the whole reli-
, to which they are essential, in their own condem-
ɔn. To this class of objections I have a short reply.
ist that these offensive doctrines do not belong to
stianity, but are human additions, and therefore do
lerogate from its reasonableness and truth. What
e doctrine most frequently adduced to fix the charge
rationality on the Gospel? It is the Trinity. This is
ounced by the unbeliever a gross offence to reason.
aches that there is one God, and yet that there are
ɔ divine persons. According to the doctrine, these
ɔ persons perform different offices, and sustain differ-
elations to each other. One is Father, another his
One sends, another is sent. They love each other,
erse with each other, and make a covenant with
other; and yet, with all these distinctions, they
according to the doctrine, not different beings, but
being, one and the same God. Is this a rational
ine? has often been the question of the objector to
stianity. I answer, No. I can as easily believe
the whole human race are one man, as that three
ite persons, performing such different offices, are
God. But I maintain, that, because the Trinity is
ional, it does not follow that the same reproach
ngs to Christianity, for this doctrine is no part of
Christian religion. I know, that there are passages
h are continually quoted in its defence; but allow
:o prove doctrines in the same way, that is, by
:hing texts from their connexion and interpreting
, without reference to the general current of Scrip-
and I can prove any thing and every thing from
Bible. I can prove, that God has human passions.
n prove transubstantiation, which is taught much
explicitly than the Trinity. Detached texts prove
ing. Christ is called God; the same title is given to

Moses and to rulers. Christ has said, "I and my Father are one;" so he prayed that all his disciples might be one, meaning not one and the same being, but one in affection and purpose. I ask you, before you judge on this point, to read the Scriptures as a whole, and to inquire into their general strain and teaching in regard to Christ. I find him uniformly distinguishing between himself and God, calling himself, not God the Son, but the Son of God, continually speaking of himself as sent by God, continually referring his power and miracles to God. I hear him saying, that of himself he can do nothing, and praying to his Father under the character of the only true God. Such I affirm to be the tenor, the current, the general strain of the New Testament; and the scattered passages, on which a different doctrine is built, should have no weight against this host of witnesses. Do not rest your faith on a few texts. Sometimes these favourite texts are no part of Scripture. For example, the famous passage on which the Trinity mainly rests, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one,"—this text, I say, though found at present in John's Epistle, and read in our churches, has been pronounced by the ablest critics a forgery; and a vast majority of the educated ministers of this country are satisfied, that it is not a part of Scripture. Suffer no man, then, to select texts for you as decisive of religious controversies. Read the whole Record for yourselves, and possess yourselves of its general import. I am very desirous to separate the doctrine in question from Christianity, because it fastens the charge of irrationality on the whole religion. It is one of the great obstacles to the propagation of the Gospel. The Jews will not hear of a Trinity. I have seen in the countenance, and heard in the tones of the voice, the horror with which that people shrink from the doctrine, that God died on the cross. Mahometans, too, when they hear this opinion from Christian missionaries, repeat the first article of their faith, "There is one God;" and look with pity or scorn on the disciples of Jesus, as deserters of the plainest and greatest truth of religion. Even the

Indian of our wilderness, who worships the Great Spirit, has charged absurdity on the teacher who has gone to indoctrinate him in the Trinity. How many, too, in Christian countries have suspected the whole religion for this one error? Believing, then, as I do, that it forms no part of Christianity, my allegiance to Jesus Christ calls me openly to withstand it. In so doing I would wound no man's feelings. I doubt not, that they who adopt this doctrine intend, equally with those who oppose it, to render homage to the truth and service to Christianity. They think that their peculiar faith gives new interest to the character and new authority to the teaching of Jesus. But they grievously err. The views, by which they hope to build up love towards Christ, detract from the perfection of his Father; and I fear, that the kind of piety which prevails now in the Christian world, bears witness to the sad influence of this obscuration of the true glory of God. We need not desert reason or corrupt Christianity, to ensure the purest, deepest love towards the only true God, or towards Jesus Christ, whom he has sent for our redemption.

I have named one doctrine which is often urged against Christianity as irrational. There is one more on which I would offer a few remarks. Christianity has often been reproached with teaching, that God brings men into life totally depraved, and condemns immense multitudes to everlasting misery for sins to which their nature has irresistibly impelled them. This is said to be irrational, and consequently such must be the religion which teaches it. I certainly shall not attempt to vindicate this theological fiction. A more irrational doctrine could not, I think, be contrived; and it is something worse; it is as immoral in its tendency, as it is unreasonable. It is suited to alienate men from God and from one another. Were it really believed (which it cannot be), men would look up with dread and detestation to the Author of their being, and look round with horror on their fellow-creatures. It would dissolve society. Were men to see in one another wholly corrupt beings, incarnate fiends, without one genuine virtue, society would become as repulsive as a den of lions or

a nest of vipers. All confidence, esteem, love, would die; and without these, the interest, charm, and worth of existence would expire. What a pang would shoot through a parent's heart, if he were to see in the smiling infant a moral being, continually and wholly propense to sin, in whose mind were thickly sown the seeds of hatred to God and goodness, and who had commenced his existence under the curse of his Creator? What good man could consent to be a parent, if his offspring were to be born to this infinitely wretched inheritance? I say the doctrine is of immoral tendency; but I do not say that they who profess it are immoral. The truth is, that none do or can hold it in its full and proper import. I have seen its advocates smile as benignantly on the child whom their creed has made a demon, as if it were an angel; and I have seen them mingling with their fellow-creatures as cordially and confidingly as if the doctrine of total depravity had never entered their ears. Perhaps the most mischievous effect of the doctrine is the dishonour which it has thrown on Christianity. This dishonour I would wipe away. Christianity teaches no such doctrine. Where do you find it in the New Testament? Did Jesus teach it, when he took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of God?" Did Paul teach it, when he spoke of the Gentiles, who have not the law, or a written revelation, but who do by nature the things contained in the law? Christianity indeed speaks strongly of human guilt, but always treats men as beings who have the power of doing right, and who have come into existence under the smile of their Creator.

I have now completed my vindication of the claim of the Gospel to the character of a rational religion; and my aim has been, not to serve a party, but the cause of our common Christianity. At the present day, one of the most urgent duties of its friends is, to rescue it from the reproach of waging war with reason. The character of our age demands this. There have been times when Christianity, though loaded with unreasonable doctrines, retained its hold on men's faith; for men had not learned to think. They received their religion as children learn

the Catechism; they substituted the priest for their own understandings, and cared neither what nor why they believed. But that day is gone by, and the spirit of freedom, which has succeeded it, is subjecting Christianity to a scrutiny more and more severe; and if this religion cannot vindicate itself to the reflecting, the calm, the wise, as a reasonable service, it cannot stand. Fanatical sects may, for a time, spread an intolerant excitement through a community, and impose silence on the objections of the sceptical. But fanaticism is the epidemic of a season; it wastes itself by its own violence. Sooner or later the voice of reflection will be heard. Men will ask, What are the claims of Christianity? Does it bear the marks of truth? And if it be found to war with nature and reason, it will be, and it ought to be, abandoned. On this ground, I am anxious that Christianity should be cleared from all human additions and corruptions. If indeed irrational doctrines belong to it, then I have no desire to separate them from it. I have no desire, for the sake of upholding the Gospel, to wrap up and conceal, much less to deny, any of its real principles. Did I think that it was burdened with one irrational doctrine, I would say so, and I would leave it, as I found it, with this millstone round its neck. But I know none such. I meet, indeed, some difficulties in the narrative part of the New Testament; and there are arguments in the Epistles, which, however suited to the Jews, to whom they were first addressed, are not apparently adapted to men at large; but I see not a principle of the religion, which my reason, calmly and impartially exercised, pronounces inconsistent with any great truth. I have the strongest conviction that Christianity is reason in its most perfect form, and therefore I plead for its disengagement from the irrational additions with which it has been clogged for ages.

With these views of Christianity, I do and I must hold it fast. I cannot surrender it to the cavils or scoffs of infidelity. I do not blush to own it, for it is a rational religion. It satisfies the wants of the intellect as well as those of the heart. I know that men of strong minds have opposed it. But, as if Providence intended that

their sophistry should carry a refutation on its own front, they have generally fallen into errors so gross and degrading, as to prove them to be any thing rather than the apostles of reason. When I go from the study of Christianity to their writings, I feel as if I were passing from the warm, bright sun into a chilling twilight, which too often deepens into utter darkness. I am not, then, ashamed of the Gospel. I see it glorified by the hostile systems which are reared for its destruction. I follow Jesus, because he is eminently "the Light;" and I doubt not, that, to his true disciples, he will be a guide to that world, where the obscurities of our present state will be dispersed, and where reason as well as virtue will be unfolded under the quickening influence and in the more manifest presence of God.

END OF VOL. I.

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